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1897

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1897
SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS

BY
OLIVER GOLDSMITH

*Adapted from the prompt-copy of the late WILLIAM WARREN, and
exhibiting all the usual cuts and stage business*

BOSTON:

Walter H. Baker & Co.

1897



TWO COPIES RECEIVED

CHARACTERS.

First Production,
Covent Garden,
London,
Mar. 15, 1773.

First New York
Production,
Aug. 2, 1773.

Boston Museum,
Sept. 12, 1867.

SIR CHARLES MARLOW,
YOUNG MARLOW . . .
SQUIRE HARDCASTLE . . .
GEORGE HASTINGS . . .
TONY LUMPKIN . . .
MCGGORY . . .
RIGER . . .
DICK . . .
THOMAS . . .

STINGO, *Landlord of the*
"Three Pigeons".

SLANG . . .
JIMMY . . .
PAT MUGGINS . . .
TOM TWIST . . .
AMINADAB . . .

MRS. HARDCASTLE . . .
KATE HARDCASTLE . . .
CONSTANCE NEVILLE . . .
MAID . . .
Barmaids, Pot-boys,
and Postillion.

Lee Lewes.
Edward Shuter.
Du Bellamy.
John Quick.

Owen Morris.
John Henry.
Mr. Goodman.
Mr. Byerly.
Lewis Hallam.
Mr. Hughes.

C. L. Farwell.
L. R. Shewell.
Robt. F. McClannin.
Harry B. Hudson.
William Warren.
J. H. Ring.
C. W. Hayes.

Mr. Pierce.

Walter Kelly.
F. Edwards.
A. de Warne.
J. R. Pitman.
James Burrows.

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Mrs. Green. Mrs. Owen Morris.
Mrs. Bulkeley. Mrs. Hallam.
Mrs. Kniveton. Miss Storer.

Mrs. J. R. Vincent.
Annie Clarke (1st time).
Mrs. T. M. Hunter.
Carrie Giddis.

Brooklyn, N.Y.,
February, 1896.

Wallack's, N.Y.,
Feb. 25, 1876.

SIR CHARLES MARLOW . . .
YOUNG MARLOW . . .
SQUIRE HARDCASTLE . . .
GEORGE HASTINGS . . .
TONY LUMPKIN . . .
MCGGORY . . .
DICK . . .
ICE . . .
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MRS. HARDCASTLE . . .
KATE HARDCASTLE . . .
CONSTANCE NEVILLE . . .
MAID . . .
Barmaids, Pot-boys, and Pos-
tilion.

T. L. Coleman.
Robert Taber.
William F. Owen.
Henry Doughty.
Edmund Lawrence.
Dodson Mitchell.
Frederick Murphy.
James T. Barton.
T. L. Cartwright.

Edward L. Stuart.

George Marion.
Arthur B. Price.
John Mitchell.
Edward Howard.
Mrs. Sol Smith.
Julia Marlowe Taber (1st time).
Eugenia Woodward.
Eda Aberle.

J. W. Shannon.
Lester Waick.
John Gilbert.
Charles A. Stevenson.
Harry Becket.
W. J. Leonard.
J. Curran.
Harry Josephs.

E. M. Holland.

F. Morgan.

C. E. Edward

Mme. Ponisi.
Ada Dyas.
Ione Burke.
Ethel Thornton.

The action of the play is confined to one evening.



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INTRODUCTION.

WHEN ambitious playmakers are looking for proofs that managers are not infallible in their judgments of manuscript plays, Oliver Goldsmith's "She Stoops to Conquer" always comes to mind. Its author had already had one comedy produced when he offered this play to Colman, then manager of Covent Garden, London, who refused it twice, and finally only consented to put it into rehearsal because he could not resist the arguments of that master of champions, Dr. Samuel Johnson, who, aided by Bishop White, pleaded successfully for at least a fair hearing for the play. But though Colman consented to lend his stage for that purpose, he was not convinced, and up to the end of the first performance his opinion of the play was held by the actors. To them the chances of its failure seemed so certain, that the popular leading man, "Gentleman" Smith, as he was called, — who was the original Charles Surface, — declined to play Young Marlow, declaring the rôle "most ungenteel;" and Henry Woodward, who was one of the best comedians of his time, followed suit by refusing to play Tony Lumpkin.

What the fate of "She Stoops to Conquer" would have been without the aid of Dr. Johnson it is too difficult to decide. But those who are interested in the methods by which plays were assured a certainty of success in those days will find a full description of the first night of this play in Richard Cumberland's "Memoirs." Cumberland was one of the party, including Goldsmith, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Caleb Whitefoord, and Fitzherbert, that on Mar. 15, 1773, sat down to an early dinner at the Shakespere Tavern, London, with Dr. Johnson in his most victorious spirit at the head of the table, and who marched afterward to Covent Garden to applaud "She Stoops to Conquer," led by Johnson himself from the front of a box. The play was a success, although once or twice the claque lost its head, and seemed as likely to swamp as to float it. The author did not venture into the theatre on that memorable first night until his friends sent for him just before the fifth act went on,

and when the fate of the play was assured. He then ventured to say to the still agitated Colman that he was afraid one joke put into the mouth of Tony Lumpkin might not be relished. "Damn it, Doctor," replied Colman, "don't be terrified at a squib; why, we have been sitting for two hours on a barrel of gunpowder!" That remark so hurt Goldsmith's pride that all friendly feeling between him and the manager ended then and there.

The defection of Smith and Woodward gave two actors, afterward well known in London, their first great opportunities, — Lee Lewes, who created Young Marlow, and John Quick — known as "Little Quick" — who was the first Tony Lumpkin.

Of its very first production in America one cannot be quite certain. It was probably at the John Street Theatre, New York, Aug. 2, 1773. That was in the fifth season of the theatre, and Hallam and Henry, the first firm of New York managers, were both in the cast.

In Boston "She Stoops to Conquer" has been less seldom given than most of the old comedies. Among the most successful of the Boston Kate Hardcastles were Miss McBride, who made her *début* here in the part Sept. 16, 1826; Miss Vincent, Miss Annie Clarke, Miss May Waldron (Mrs. Stuart Robson), and Julia Marlowe Taber. The very best Tony Lumpkin was that of William Warren, first played at the Museum during his first season there, — 1847-1848, — and not yet equalled by the few players who have tried it.

In the present edition is printed for the first time all the stage business that has become incorporated into the piece in one hundred and twenty-three years, and was as well known to old actors and managers as the text itself, although up to date it has only been preserved in the traditions of players and the prompt-books of old theatres.

M. A.

BOSTON, *June*, 1897.

PROPERTIES.

- ACT I. SCENE I. — Hand-bell on Prompter's desk. Whip for Tony.
 SCENE II. — Whips for Marlow, Hastings, and Postillion.
 Ale-mugs in bar. Pipes, punch-bowl, and lighted candles
 on table.
- ACT II. Bell to ring in L. U. E. Lighted candles, L. U. E. Punch
 tankard, L. 2 E. Bill of fare, L. 2 E. Fan and shawl for
 Miss Hardcastle. Apple in Tony's pocket and whip for
 Tony.
- ACT III. Casket, R. U. E.; string and cup and ball for Tony. Bunch
 of big keys, L. 2 E. for Miss Hardcastle.
- ACT IV. Bunch of keys for Miss Hardcastle. Broom and letter, L. 2 E.
 for Diggory.
- ACT V. SCENE I. — Whip for Tony. Cane for Hardcastle.
-

COSTUMES.

SIR CHARLES MARLOW. — Gentleman's old-fashioned blue suit, camlet
 fly, and cocked hat.

HARDCASTLE. — Old-fashioned camlet suit, cocked hat, and scarlet
 roquelaire.

YOUNG MARLOW. — *First dress*: Dark green coat, white waistcoat,
 pantaloons, and black riding-boots. This dress is worn in Act I., Scene
 II., and in Act II. For Act III. the boots are removed, and buckled
 shoes worn; and for Act IV. full evening dress, ruffled shirt, and sword
 are assumed.

HASTINGS. — Dress similar to Marlow, though plainer in both cut and
 color.

TONY LUMPKIN. — Scarlet jacket, flowered silk waistcoat, buff breeches.

STINGO. — Country coat, red waistcoat, blue apron, and blue stockings.

DIGGORY. — White country coat, flowered waistcoat, buff breeches.

MRS. HARDCASTLE. — *First dress*: Brocade sack and petticoat. *Sec-
 ond dress*: Brown stuff petticoat, with mud on it, and a small black cloak
 and huge green calash.

MISS HARDCASTLE. — *First dress*: Smart, fashionably made brocade,
 elaborately trimmed with lace, and of Watteau style. *Second dress*: In
 Act II. a bonnet and lace scarf are added to this. Act III., pretty print
 gown with ribbon-trimmed apron and white cap, which is worn during the
 balance of the play.

MISS NEVILLE. — Blue satin body, and leno petticoat trimmed with
 blue satin.



SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER.

ACT I.

Scene I. — *A chamber in an old-fashioned house, first grooves.*

Enter MR. HARDCASTLE, *followed by* MRS. HARDCASTLE, R. I E.

MRS. H. (R.). I vow, Mr. Hardcastle, you're very particular. Is there a creature in the whole country but ourselves, that does not take a trip to town now and then to rub off the rust a little? There's the two Miss Hoggs and our neighbor, Mrs. Grigsby, go to take a month's polishing every winter.

HARD. (L.). Ay, and bring back vanity and affectation to last them a whole year. I wonder why London cannot keep its own fools at home. In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us, but now they travel faster than a stage-coach. Its fopperies come down, not only as inside passengers, but in the very basket.

MRS. H. Ay, your times were fine times, indeed; you have been telling us of them for many a long year. Here we live in an old rumbling mansion that looks for all the world like an inn, but that we never see company. Our best visitors are old Mrs. Oddfish, the curate's wife, and little Cripplegate, the lame dancing-master; and all our entertainment your old stories of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough. I hate such old-fashioned trumpery.

HARD. And I love everything that's old; old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine; and, I believe, Dorothy (*taking her hand*), you'll own I have been pretty fond of an old wife.

MRS. H. Lord, Mr. Hardcastle, you're clever at your Dorothy's and your old wife's. You may be a Darby, but I'll be no Joan, I promise you. I'm not so old as you'd make me by more than one good year. Add twenty to twenty, and make money of that.

HARD. Let me see — twenty added to twenty makes just fifty and seven.

MRS. H. It's false, Mr. Hardcastle; I was but twenty when I had Tony by Mr. Lumpkin, my first husband; and he's not come to years of discretion yet.

HARD. Nor ever will, I dare answer for him. Ay, you have taught him finely.

MRS. H. No matter, Tony Lumpkin has a good fortune. My son is not to live by his learning. I don't think a boy wants much learning to spend fifteen hundred a year.

HARD. Learning, quotha! a mere composition of tricks and mischief.

MRS. H. Humor, my dear; nothing but humor. Come, Mr. Hardcastle, you must allow the boy a little humor.

HARD. I'd sooner allow him a horsepond! If burning the footmen's shoes, frightening the maids, worrying the kittens, be humor, he has it. It was but yesterday he fastened my wig to the back of my chair, and when I went to make a bow, I popped my bald head into Mrs. Frizzle's face.

MRS. H. And am I to blame? The poor boy was always too sickly to do any good. A school would be his death. When he comes to be a little stronger, who knows what a year or two's Latin may do for him?

HARD. Latin for him! A cat and a fiddle! No, no; the alehouse and the stable are the only schools he'll ever go to.

MRS. H. Well, we must not snub the poor boy now, for I believe we sha'n't have him long among us. Anybody who looks in his face can see he's consumptive.

HARD. Ay, if growing too fat be one of the symptoms.

MRS. H. He coughs sometimes.

HARD. Yes, when his liquor goes the wrong way.

MRS. H. I'm actually afraid of his lungs.

HARD. (C.). And truly, so am I; for he sometimes whoops like a speaking trumpet. (TONY, *hallooing behind the scenes at R. I E.*) Oh, there he goes — a very consumptive figure, truly! .

Enter TONY, R. I E., *crossing the stage to L. I E.*

MRS. H. (*crosses to L. to TONY*). Tony, where are you going, my charmer? Won't you give papa and I a little of your company, lovee?

TONY. I'm in haste, mother; I can't stay.

MRS. H. You sha'n't venture out this raw evening, my dear. You look most shocking—

TONY. I can't stay, I tell you. The "Three Pigeons" expects me down every moment. There's some fun going forward.

HARD. Ay; the alehouse, the old place. I thought so.

MRS. H. A low, paltry set of fellows!

TONY. Not so low, neither. There's Dick Muggins the exciseman, Jack Slang the horse-doctor, little Aminadab that grinds the music-box, and Tom Twist that spins the pewter platter.

MRS. H. Pray, my dear, disappoint them for one night at least.

TONY. As for disappointing them, I should not so much mind; but I can't abide to disappoint myself.

MRS. H. (*detaining him*). You sha'n't go.

TONY. I will, I tell you.

MRS. H. I say you sha'n't.

TONY. We'll see which is strongest, you or I.

(*MRS. H. clings to the tail of TONY's coat, and tries to keep him back; he pulls away, dragging her off with him as he shouts, "Yoiks! Yoiks!"*)

Exit with MRS. HARDCASTLE, L. I E.

HARD. (C.). Ay, there goes a pair that only spoil each other. But is not the whole age in a combination to drive sense and discretion out-of-doors? There's my pretty darling Kate; the fashions of the times have almost infected her too. By living a year or two in town, she is as fond of gauze and French frippery as the best of them.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, R. I E.

Blessings on my pretty innocence! Dressed out as usual, my Kate. Goodness! what a quantity of superfluous silk hast thou got about thee, girl! I could never teach the fools of this age that the indigent world could be clothed out of the trimmings of the vain.

MISS H. You know our agreement, sir. You allow me the morning to receive and pay visits, and to dress in my own manner; and in the evening I put on my housewife's dress to please you.

HARD. Well, remember I insist on the terms of our agreement; and, by-the-by, I believe I shall have occasion to try your obedience this very evening.

MISS H. I protest, sir, I don't comprehend your meaning.

HARD. (L.). Then, to be plain with you, Kate, I expect the young gentleman I have chosen to be your husband from town this very day. I have his father's letter, in which he informs me his son is set out, and that he intends to follow himself shortly after.

MISS H. (R.). Indeed! I wish I had known something of this before. Bless me, how shall I behave? It's a thousand to one I sha'n't like him; our meeting will be so formal and so like a thing of business, that I shall find no room for friendship or esteem.

HARD. Depend upon it, child, I'll never control your choice; but Mr. Marlow, whom I have pitched upon, is the son of my old friend, Sir Charles Marlow, of whom you have heard me talk so often. The young gentleman has been bred a scholar, and is designed for an employment in the service of his country. I am told he's a man of an excellent understanding.

MISS H. Is he?

HARD. Very generous.

MISS H. I believe I shall like him.

HARD. Young and brave.

MISS H. I'm sure I shall like him.

HARD. And very handsome.

MISS H. My dear papa, say no more. (*Kissing him.*) He's mine, I'll have him.

HARD. And to crown all, Kate, he's one of the most bashful and reserved young fellows in all the world.

MISS H. Eh! you have frozen me to death again. That word reserved has undone all the rest of his accomplishments. A reserved lover, it is said, always makes a suspicious husband.

HARD. On the contrary, modesty seldom resides in a breast that is not enriched with nobler virtues. It was the very feature in his character that first struck me.

MISS H. He must have more striking features to catch me, I promise you. However, if he be so young, so handsome, and so everything, as you mention, I believe he'll do still. I think I'll have him.

HARD. Ay, Kate, but there is still an obstacle. It's more than an even wager he may not have you.

MISS H. My dear papa, why will you mortify one so? Well, if he refuse, instead of breaking my heart at his indifference, I'll only break my glass for its flattery, set my cap to some newer fashion, and look out for some less difficult admirer.

HARD. Bravely resolved! In the meantime, I'll go prepare the servants for his reception; as we seldom see company, they want as much training as a company of recruits, the first day's muster. **Exit L. I E.**

MISS H. (C.). Lud, this news of papa's puts me all in a flutter! Young, handsome; these he put last, but I put them foremost. Sensible, good-natured; I like all that. But, then, reserved and sheepish, that's much against him. Yet can't he be cured of his timidity, by being taught to be proud of his wife? Yes, and can't I—but I vow I am disposing of the husband before I have secured the lover.

Enter MISS NEVILLE, R. I E.

I'm glad you're come, my dear. Tell me, Constance, how do I look this evening? Is there anything whimsical about me? Is it one of my well-looking days, child? Am I in face to-day?

MISS N. (R.). Perfectly, my dear. Yet now I look again—bless me!—sure no accident has happened among the canary birds or the gold fishes. Has your brother or the cat been meddling? Or has the last novel been too moving?

MISS H. (L.). No; nothing of all this. I have been threatened—I can scarce get it out—I have been threatened with a lover.

MISS N. And his name—

MISS H. Is Marlow.

MISS N. Indeed.

MISS H. The son of Sir Charles Marlow.

MISS N. As I live, the most intimate friend of Mr. Hastings, my admirer. They are never asunder. I believe you must have seen him when we lived in town.

MISS H. Never.

MISS N. He's a very singular character, I assure you. Among women of reputation and virtue he is the modestest man alive; but his acquaintance give him a very different

character among creatures of another stamp. You understand me?

Miss H. An odd character, indeed. I shall never be able to manage him. What shall I do? Pshaw! think no more of him, but trust to occurrences for success. But how goes on your own affair, my dear? Has my mother been courting you for my brother Tony, as usual?

READY to change set.

Miss N. I have just come from one of our agreeable *tête-à-têtes*. She has been saying a hundred tender things, and setting off her pretty monster as the very pink of perfection.

Miss H. And her partiality is such that she actually thinks him so. A fortune like yours is no small temptation. Besides, as she has the whole management of it, I'm not surprised to see her unwilling to let it go out of the family.

Miss N. A fortune like mine, which chiefly consists in jewels, is no such mighty temptation. But at any rate, if my dear Hastings be but constant, I make no doubt to be too hard for her at last. However, I let her suppose that I am in love with her son, and she never once dreams that my affections are fixed upon another.

Miss H. My good brother holds out stoutly. I could almost love him for hating you so.

Miss N. It is a good-natured creature at bottom, and I'm sure would wish to see me married to anybody but himself.

BELL rings off R.

But my aunt's bell rings for our afternoon's walk round the improvements. Allons! Courage is necessary, as our affairs are critical.

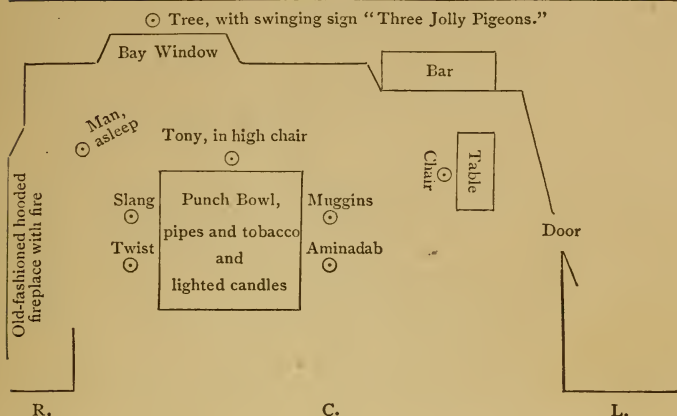
Miss H. Would it were bedtime, and all were well!

Exeunt R. I E.

CHANGE set.

Scene II. — *An Alehouse Room.*

LANDSCAPE DROP.



(*As scene opens characters are discovered as per diagram,—BAR-MAID behind Bar; POT-BOY round taking orders. All the characters at the table should be dressed and made-up as described by TONY in his first scene,—DICK MUGGINS as an "exciseman," JACK SLANG as a "horse doctor," AMINADAB as a travelling "street bear dancer," TOM TWIST as a street acrobat.*)

ALL (*as scene opens*). Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah, bravo!

SLANG. Now, gentlemen, silence for a song. The Squire is going to knock himself down for a song.

ALL. Ay, a song, a song.

TONY. Then I'll sing you, gentlemen, a song I made upon this alehouse, the "Three Pigeons."

SONG.—TONY.

Let schoolmasters puzzle their brain,
 With grammar, and nonsense, and learning;
 Good liquor, I stoutly maintain,
 Gives genius a better discerning.
 Let them brag of their heathenish gods,
 Their Lethes, their Styxes, and Stygians;
 Their quis, their quæ, and their quods,
 They're all but a parcel of pigeons.

Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

(An old farmer crosses window, and enters L. 2 E.; sits at table L. POT-BOY runs to him, takes his order, goes to bar and gets pot of ale, pipe, tobacco, and taper.)

When hypocrite preachers come down
 A preaching that drinking is sinful,
 I'll wager the rascals a crown,
 They always preach best with a skinful.
 But when you come down with your pence,
 For a slice of such scurvy religion,
 I'll leave it to all men of sense,
 But you, my good friends, are the pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

Then come, put the jorum about,
 And let us be merry and clever;
 Our hearts and our liquors are stout,
 Here's the Three Jolly Pigeons forever.
 Let some cry up woodcock or hare,
 Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons;
 But of all the birds in the air,
 Here's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

SLANG. The Squire has got spunk in him.

MUGGINS. I loves to hear him sing, bekase he never gives us nothing that's low.

AMINADAB. Oh, damn anything that's low! I can't bear it.

MUGGINS. The genteel thing is the genteel thing, a'ter all. If so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation accordingly.

AMINADAB. I like the maxim of it, Master Muggins. What though I am obligated to dance a bear, a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this be my poison if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelest of tunes, — "Water Parted from the Sea," the minuet in "Ariadne," or "Come Tickle my Nose with a Barley Straw."

SLANG. What a pity it is the Squire is not come to his own! It would be well for all the publicans within ten miles round of him.

TONY. Ecod, and so it would, Master Slang. I'd then show what it was to keep choice of company.

AMINADAB. Oh, he takes after his own father for that. To be sure, old Squire Lumpkin was the finest gentleman I ever set my eyes on. (MARLOW, HASTINGS, and POSTILLION are seen to cross behind window R. to L. U. E.) For winding

the straight horn, or beating a thicket for a hare or a wench, he never had his fellow. It was a saying in the place, that he kept the best horses, dogs, and girls in the whole country.

TONY. Ecod, and when I'm of age I'll be no recreant, I promise you. I have been thinking of Bet Bouncer and the miller's gray mare to begin with. But come, my boys, drink a bout and be merry, for you pay no reckoning.

Enter STINGO, *the Landlord*, L. 2 E.

Well, Stingo, what's the matter?

STINGO. There be two gentlemen in a post-chaise at the door. 'They have lost their way upo' the forest, and they are talking something about Mr. Hardcastle.

TONY. As sure as can be, one of them must be the gentleman that's coming down to court my sister. Then desire them to step this way, and I'll set them right in a twinkling.

Exit STINGO, L. 2 E.

Gentlemen, as they mayn't be good enough company for you, keep your seats for a moment, and I'll be with you in the squeezing of a lemon. (*Coming down R. C.*) Father-in-law has been calling me whelp and hound this half year. Now, if I pleased, I could be so revenged upon the old grumble-tonian. But then I'm afraid — afraid of what? I shall soon be worth fifteen hundred a year, and let him frighten me out of that if he can.

Enter L. 2 E., STINGO, *followed by* MARLOW, HASTINGS, and POSTILLION. STINGO *crosses to* TONY *at R., and enters into conversation with him.* POSTILLION *goes up to bar and gets a mug of beer, and stands chaffing with* BARMAID *during following scene.*

MAR. (C.). What a tedious, uncomfortable day have we had of it! We were told it was but forty miles across the country, and we have come about threescore.

HAST. (L.). And all, Marlow, from that unaccountable reserve of yours, that would not let us inquire more frequently on the way.

MAR. I own, Hastings, I am unwilling to lay myself under an obligation to every one I meet; and often stand the chance of an unmannerly answer.

HAST. At present, however, we are not likely to receive any answer. (*By his gaze directing* MARLOW'S *attention to*

TONY, *who stands R., biting the end of his pipe-stem. During the entire scene following, the men at table take a lively interest.*)

TONY (R., *with his pipe in his hand*). No offence, gentlemen. But I'm told you have been inquiring for one, Mr. Hardcastle, in these parts. Do you know what part of the country you are in?

HAST. Not in the least, sir, but should thank you for information.

TONY. Nor the way you came?

HAST. No, sir; but if you can inform us —

TONY. Why, gentlemen, if you know neither the road you are going, nor where you are, nor the road you came, the first thing I have to inform you is, that (*pauses and blows out a long cloud of smoke*) — you have lost your way.

MAR. We wanted no information of that, sir.

TONY. Pray, gentlemen, may I be so bold as to ask the place from whence you came?

MAR. (*crosses to R.*). That's not necessary towards directing us where we are to go.

TONY (*moves to C.*). No offence; but question for question is all fair, you know. Pray, gentlemen, is not this same Hardcastle a cross-grained, old-fashioned, whimsical fellow, with an ugly face, a daughter, and a pretty son?

HAST. We have not seen the gentleman, but he has the family you mention.

TONY. The daughter, a tall, trapesing, trolloping, talkative maypole; the son, a pretty, well-bred, agreeable youth, that everybody is fond of?

MAR. Our information differs in this. The daughter is said to be well-bred and beautiful; the son, an awkward booby, reared up and spoiled at his mother's apron string.

TONY. He-he-hem! Then, gentlemen, all I have to tell you is, that you won't reach Mr. Hardcastle's house this night, I believe.

HAST. Unfortunate!

TONY. It's a damned long, dark, boggy, dirty, dangerous way. Stingo, tell the gentlemen the way to Mr. Hardcastle's. (*Winking at STINGO.*) Mr. Hardcastle's, of Quagmire Marsh, you know.

STINGO (R. C.). Master Hardcastle's! Lack-a-daisy, my masters, you're come a deadly deal wrong! When you came to the bottom of the hill, you should have crossed down Squash-lane.

MAR. Cross down Squash-lane !

STINGO. Then you were to keep straight forward, till you came to where four roads meet !

MAR. Come to where four roads meet !

TONY. Ay ; but you must be sure to take only one of them.

HAST. Oh !

TONY. At a time.

MAR. Oh, sir, you're facetious.

TONY. Then keeping to the right, you are to go sideways till you come upon Crackskull Common ; there you must look sharp for the track of the wheel, and go forward till you come to Farmer Murrain's barn. Coming to the farmer's barn, you are to turn to the right, and then to the left, and then to the right about again, till you find out the old mill —

MAR. Zounds, man ! we could as soon find out the longitude !

HAST. What's to be done, Marlow ?

MAR. This house promises but a poor reception ; though perhaps the landlord can accommodate us.

STINGO. Alack, master, we have but one spare bed in the whole house —

TONY (*hastily interrupting*). And to my knowledge that's taken up by three lodgers already, besides the man in the parlor waiting for a chance. (*After a pause, in which the rest seem disconcerted.*) I have hit it. Don't you think, Stingo, our landlady could accommodate the gentlemen ?

STINGO (*indignantly*). What ?

TONY. Oh, I don't mean that, you fool. I mean by the fireside, with — three chairs and a bolster ?

HAST. Damn your fireside !

MAR. And damn your three chairs and a bolster, say I. (*Crosses to c.*)

TONY (*crosses down R. ; to STINGO*). You do, do you ? Then let me see — what if you go on a mile farther to the Buck's Head — the old Buck's Head on the hill — one of the best inns in the whole county ?

HAST. Oh, ho ! so we have escaped an adventure for this night, however.

STINGO (*aside to TONY*). Sure, you ben't sending them to your father's as an inn, be you ?

TONY. Mum, you fool, you ! Let them find that out.

(*To them.*) You have only to keep on straight forward, till you come to a large old house by the roadside. You'll see a pair of large horns over the door. That's the sign. Drive up the yard, and call stoutly about you.

HAST. Sir, we are obliged to you. The servants can't miss the way?

TONY. No, no. But I tell you, though — the landlord is rich and going to leave off business; so he wants to be thought a gentleman, saving your presence, he, he, he! He'll be for giving you his company, and, ecod! if you mind him, he'll persuade you that his mother was an alderman, and his aunt a justice of peace.

WARN curtain.

STINGO. A troublesome old blade, to be sure; but he keeps as good wines and beds as any in the whole county.

MAR. Well, if he supplies us with these, we shall want no further connection. (*Going towards door L. 2 E.*) We are to turn to the right, did you say?

TONY. No, no; straight forward.

Exit MARLOW, followed by HASTINGS and POSTILLION, L. 2 E.

I'll just step myself, and show you a piece of the way. (*To STINGO.*) Mum!

(*Bursts of laughter at table until curtain is down as TONY exit L. 2 E.*)

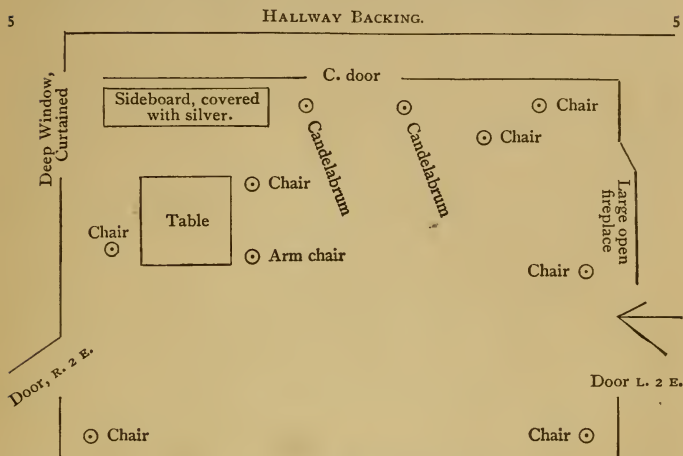
RING curtain.

STINGO. Ah, bless your heart, for a sweet, pleasant — damned, mischievous son of — no matter.

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT II.

Scene. — *A room in* **HARDCASTLE'S** *house, fourth grooves.*



MOONLIGHT on deep window at right when curtain rises.

LIGHTED candles ready,
L. U. E. Gate-bell ready to ring,
L. U. E. Punch tankard and bill of fare ready,
L. 2 E.

As curtain rises enter **HARDCASTLE** *at C. from R., followed by* **DIGGORY, DICK, ROGER, and THOMAS.**

HARD. (C.). Well, I hope you are perfect in the table exercise I have been teaching you these three days. You all know your posts and your places, and can show that you have been used to good company without stirring from home.

ALL. Ay, ay. (*All stand in line from C. to L.*)

HARD. When company comes, you are not to pop out and stare, and then run in again, like frightened rabbits in a warren.

ALL. No, no. (DIGGORY stands with his hands stiffly at his sides, the thumbs turned out. ROGER has hands in his pockets, and DICK is scratching his head.)

HARD. You, Diggory, whom I have taken from the barn, are to make a show at the side-table; and you, Roger, whom I have advanced from the plough, are to place yourself behind my chair. But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets. Take your hands from your pockets, Roger, and from your head, you blockhead, you. See how Diggory carries his hands. (*All look at DIGGORY and try to imitate him.*) They're a little too stiff, indeed, but that's no great matter.

DIG. Ay, mind how I hold them; I learned to hold my hands this way when I was upon drill for the militia. And so, being upon drill—

HARD. You must not be so talkative, Diggory; you must be all attention to the guests; you must hear us talk, and not think of talking; you must see us drink and not think of drinking; you must see us eat, and not think of eating.

DIG. By the laws, your worship, that's perfectly impossible. Whenever Diggory sees yeating going forwards, ecod, he's always wishing for a mouthful himself.

HARD. Blockhead! is not a bellyful in the kitchen as good as a bellyful in the parlor? Stay your stomach with that reflection.

DIG. Ecod, I thank your worship, I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry.

HARD. Diggory, you are too talkative. Then, if I happen to say a good thing, or tell a good story at table, you must not all burst out a laughing, as if you made part of the company.

DIG. Then, ecod, your worship must not tell the story of Old Grouse in the gun-room; I can't help laughing at that—he! he! he!—for the soul of me. We have laughed at that these twenty years—ha! ha! ha!

HARD. Ha! ha! ha! The story is a good one. Well, honest Diggory, you may laugh at that—but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave? A glass of wine, sir, if you please. (*To DIGGORY.*) Eh, why don't you move?

DIG. Ecod, your worship, I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upon the table, and then I'm as bould as a lion.

HARD. What, will nobody move?

DIG. I'm not to leave this place.

ROGER. I'm sure it's no place of mine.

DICK. Nor mine, for sartain.

DIG. Wouns! and I'm sure it canna be mine.

HARD. You numskulls! And so, while, like your betters, you are quarrelling for places, the guests must be starved? Oh, you dunces! I find I must begin all over again.

GATE-BELL heard, L. U. E.

But don't I hear a coach drive into the yard? To your posts, you blockheads! I'll go, in the meantime, and give my old friend's son a hearty welcome at the gate.

Exit C. to L.

DIG. Wouns! my place is gone clean out of my head.

ROGER. I know that my place is everywhere.

DICK. Where the devil is mine?

DIG. My place is to be nowhere at all; so I've go about my business. (*Turns and sees ROGER, who is going C.*) What are you going to do?

ROGER. Nothing.

DIG. Well, I'll come and help you.

Exeunt all three servants in a panic, C. to L. DIGGORY re-enters at once, C. from L., pompously, with a lighted candle in each hand.

DIG. (*marching from entrance to table at R. with exaggerated dignity*). Welcome, gentlemen, welcome.

Enter, C. from L., MARLOW, followed by HASTINGS. DIGGORY places candles on table, swings stiffly right about face; the two men watching him. As he passes up stage, MARLOW hits him with his whip as he passes, and both he and HASTINGS laugh heartily as DIGGORY goes off hastily C. to L.

HAST. (L.). After the disappointments of the day, welcome once more, Charles, to the comforts of a clean room and a good fire. Upon my word, a very well-looking house; antique, but creditable. (*Looking carelessly about.*)

MAR. (R.). The usual fate of a large mansion. Having first ruined the master by good housekeeping, it at last comes to levy contributions as an inn.

HAST. As you say, we passengers are to be taxed to pay

all these fineries. I have often seen a good sideboard, or a marble chimneypiece, though not actually put in the account inflame the bill confoundedly.

MAR. Travellers, George, must pay in all places. The only difference is, that in good inns you pay dearly for luxuries; in bad inns you are fleeced and starved. (*They draw chairs to the fireplace and toast their feet. MARLOW up stage, facing audience, HASTINGS in profile.*)

HAST. You have lived pretty much among them. In truth, I have been so often surprised that you, who have seen so much of the world, with your natural good sense and your many opportunities, could never yet acquire a requisite share of assurance.

MAR. The Englishman's malady. But tell me, George, where could I have learned that assurance you talk of? My life has been chiefly spent in a college or an inn, in seclusion from that lovely part of the creation that chiefly teach men confidence. I don't know that I was ever familiarly acquainted with a single modest woman except my mother. But among females of another class you know —

HAST. Ay, among them you are impudent enough of all conscience.

MAR. They are with us, you know.

HAST. But in the company of women of reputation I never saw such an idiot, such a trembler; you look for all the world as if you wanted an opportunity of stealing out of the room.

MAR. Why, man, that's because I do want to steal out of the room. Faith, I have often formed a resolution to break the ice, and rattle away at any rate. But, I don't know how, a single glance from a pair of fine eyes has totally upset my resolution. An impudent fellow may counterfeit modesty, but I'll be hanged if a modest man can ever counterfeit impudence.

HAST. If you could but say half the fine things to them that I have heard you lavish upon the barmaid of an inn, or even a college bedmaker —

MAR. Why, George, I can't say fine things to them. They freeze, they petrify me. They may talk of a comet, or a burning mountain, or some such bagatelle; but to me a modest woman, dressed out in all her finery, is the most tremendous object of the whole creation.

HAST. Ha! ha! ha! At this rate, man, how can you ever expect to marry?

MAR. Never, unless, as among kings and princes, my bride were to be courted by proxy. If, indeed, like an Eastern bridegroom, one were to be introduced to a wife he never saw before, it might be endured. But to go through all the terrors of a formal courtship, together with the episode of aunts, grandmothers, and cousins, and at last to blurt out the broad, staring question of,—"Madam, will you marry me?" No, no, that's a strain much above me, I assure you.

HAST. I pity you! But how do you intend behaving to the lady you are come down to visit at the request of your father?

MAR. (*rises; down C. Business of illustrating his words*). As I behave to all other ladies. Bow very low—answer yes or no to all her demands. But for the rest, I don't think I shall venture to look in her face till I see my father's again.

HAST. (*rising; comes L.*). I'm surprised that one who is so warm a friend, can be so cool a lover.

MAR. To be explicit, my dear Hastings, my chief inducement down was to be instrumental in forwarding your happiness, not my own. Miss Neville loves you; the family don't know you; as my friend, you are sure of a reception, and let honor do the rest.

HAST. My dear Marlow! But I'll suppress the emotion. Were I a wretch, meanly seeking to carry off a fortune, you should be the last man in the world I would apply to for assistance. But Miss Neville's person is all I ask, and that is mine, both from her deceased father's consent, and her own inclination.

MAR. Happy man! You have talents and art to captivate any woman. I'm doomed to adore the sex, and yet to converse with the only part of it I despise.

HARD. (*heard without at L.*). Diggory! bring in the tankard of punch.

DIG. (*without*). I will, your worship.

MAR. Pshaw! this fellow here to interrupt us. (*Crosses L. C., to HASTINGS.*)

Enter HARDCASTLE, C. *from L.*

HARD. (C.). Gentlemen, once more you are heartily welcome. Which is Mr. Marlow? Sir, you're heartily welcome. It's not my way, you see, to receive my friends with my back to the fire; I like to give them a hearty reception in the old

style at my gate ; I like to see their horses and trunks taken care of.

MAR. (*aside, linking arms with HASTINGS and walking with him to and fro, MR. HARDCASTLE following them a little up stage and endeavoring to engage in the conversation at every opportunity*). He has got our names from the servants already. (*To HARDCASTLE.*) We approve your caution and hospitality, sir. (*To HASTINGS.*) I have been thinking, George, of changing our travelling dresses in the morning ; I am grown confoundedly ashamed of mine.

HARD. I beg, Mr. Marlow, you'll use no ceremony in this house. (*Coming in front of them.*)

HAST. (*ignoring him*). I fancy, George, you're right ; the first blow is half the battle. I intend opening the campaign with white and gold.

HARD. Mr. Marlow — Mr. Hastings — gentlemen — pray be under no restraint in this house. This is Liberty-hall, gentlemen ; you may do just as you please here.

MAR. Yet, George, if we open the campaign too fiercely at first, we may want ammunition before it is over. I think to reserve the embroidery to secure a retreat. What do you think of the brown and gold ?

(*They pause at C. HARDCASTLE crowds in between them.*)

HARD. Your talking of a retreat, Mr. Marlow, puts me in mind of the Duke of Marlborough, when he went to besiege Denain. He first summoned the garrison —

MAR. Ay, and we'll summon your garrison, old boy.

HARD. He first summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men.

HAST. What a strange fellow is this ! I don't know — brown and gold don't go very well together.

HARD. I say, gentlemen, as I was telling you, he summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men —

MAR. Why you know the girls like finery.

HARD. Which might consist of about five thousand men, well appointed with stores, ammunition, and other implements of war. Now, says the Duke of Marlborough to George Brooks, that stood next to him — you must have heard of George Brooks — I'll pawn my dukedom, says he, but I take that garrison without spilling a drop of blood. So —

MAR. What, my good friend, if you give us a glass of punch in the meantime? It would help us to carry on the siege with vigor.

HARD. Punch, sir?

MAR. Yes, sir, punch. A glass of warm punch, after our journey, will be comfortable. This is Liberty-hall, you know.

Enter DIGGORY, L. 2 E., with a tankard.

DIG. (L.). Here's a cup, your worship.

HARD. Here's a cup, sir. (*Crossing to DIGGORY, takes it from him.*)

MAR. (*aside*). So this fellow, in his Liberty-hall, will only let us have just what he pleases.

DIG. (*aside to HARDCASTLE*). Did you tell them Old Grouse in the gun-room?

HARD. No.

DIG. Tell it! tell it!

Exit, L. 2 E., chuckling.

HARD. I hope you'll find it to your mind. I have prepared it with my own hands, and I believe you'll own the ingredients are tolerable. Will you be so good as to pledge me, sir?

(MARLOW takes the tankard rather abruptly from him. HARDCASTLE scarcely notices the brusqueness, but goes up stage for a chair, which he brings down C., and is about to sit, when MARLOW takes it from him. HARDCASTLE goes for a second chair, but is forestalled by HASTINGS. HARDCASTLE stands a moment looking from one to the other, laughs as if trying to consider it a joke. He then goes up for the armchair, brings it down, and tries to crowd it in between them. HASTINGS turns with his chair a little to the L., looking round at the familiarity of HARDCASTLE. At this opportunity HARDCASTLE crowds his chair between theirs, and climbs over the arm into it, seating himself in between them.)

MAR. (R.) Sir, my service to you. (*Drinks, and hands the tankard across to HASTINGS. He drinks, then passes it back to MARLOW. HARDCASTLE stops it with a determined air.*)

HARD. (C.). Mr. Marlow, here's to our better acquaintance.

(He is about to drink when MARLOW deliberately takes tankard from him.)

MAR. *(aside)*. A very impudent fellow, this! But he's a character, and I'll humor him a little. *(Drinks.)*

HAST. (L., *aside*). I see this fellow wants to give us his company, and forgets that he's an innkeeper, before he has learned to be a gentleman.

MAR. From the excellence of your cup, my old friend, I suppose you have a good deal of business in this part of the country. Warm work, now and then at elections, I suppose?

HARD. No, sir; I have long given that work over.

HAST. So, then you have no turn for politics, I find?

HARD. Why, no, sir; there was a time, indeed, when I fretted myself about the mistakes of government, like other people; but finding myself every day grow more angry, and the government no better, I left it to mend itself. Sir, my service to you.

(He reaches his hand for the tankard. MARLOW, shaking it round, takes no notice of the action. HASTINGS'S speech attracts his attention again.)

HAST. So that, with eating above stairs, and drinking below, with receiving your friends within, and amusing them without, you lead a good, pleasant, bustling life of it.

HARD. I do stir about a great deal, that's certain. Half the differences of the parish are adjusted in this very parlor.

MAR. *(after drinking)*. And you have an argument in your cup, old gentleman, better than any in Westminster Hall.

HARD. Ay, young gentleman, that, and a little philosophy.

MAR. *(aside)*. Well, this is the first time I ever heard of an innkeeper's philosophy.

(He is about to hand tankard across to HASTINGS, when HARDCASTLE puts out his hand to take it. MARLOW withdraws it and passes it behind HARDCASTLE to HASTINGS. HARDCASTLE turns completely round, watching course of tankard.)

HAST. *(taking tankard)*. So then, like an experienced general, you attack them on every quarter. If you find their reason manageable, you attack it with your philosophy; if

you find they have no reason, you attack them with this. Here's your health, my philosopher.

(He takes a long draught, finishing with a gasp for breath, and then gives the tankard to HARDCASTLE, who looks into it suspiciously and, finding it empty, looks from one to the other and laughs, as if finding it a good joke, then puts it on table when they rise.)

HARD. Good, very good, thank you; ha! ha! Your generalship puts me in mind of Prince Eugene, when he fought the Turks at the battle of Belgrade. You shall hear.

(All rising and putting chairs back.)

MAR. (R.). Instead of the battle of Belgrade, I think it's almost time to talk about supper. What has your philosophy got in the house for supper?

HARD. (C.). For supper, sir? *(Aside.)* Was ever such a request made to a man in his own house?

MAR. Yes, sir, supper, sir. I begin to feel an appetite. I shall make devilish work to-night in the larder, I promise you.

HARD. *(aside)*. Such a brazen dog sure never my eyes beheld. *(To MARLOW.)* Why, really, sir, as for supper, I can't well tell. My Dorothy and the cook-maid settle these things between them. I leave these kind of things entirely to them.

MAR. You do, do you?

HARD. Entirely. By-the-by, I believe they are in actual consultation upon what's for supper this moment in the kitchen.

MAR. Then I beg they'll admit me as one of their privy council. It's a way I have got. When I travel I always choose to regulate my own supper. Let the cook be called. No offence, I hope, sir?

HARD. Oh, no, sir, none in the least — yet I don't know now; our Bridget, the cook-maid, is not very communicative upon these occasions. Should we send for her, she might scold us all out of the house.

HAST. (L.). Let's see the list of the larder, then. I ask it as a favor. I always match my appetite to my bill of fare.

MAR. *(to HARDCASTLE, who looks at them with surprise)*. Sir, he's very right, and it's my way too.

HARD. Sir, you have a right to command here. *(Calling.)*

Here, Diggory, send us the bill of fare for to-night's supper. I believe it's drawn out. Your manner, Mr. Hastings, puts me in mind of my uncle, Colonel Gunthorp. It was a saying of his, that no man was sure of his supper till he had eaten it.

Enter DIGGORY, *with bill of fare*, L. 2 E.

DIG. (*aside to* HARDCASTLE). Did you tell about Old Grouse?

HARD. No, no. (*Taking bill of fare.*)

DIG. Tell 'em.

Exit L. 2 E.

HAST. (*aside*). All upon the high ropes! His uncle a colonel — we shall soon hear of his mother being a justice of the peace. But let's hear the bill of fare.

(HARDCASTLE *is about to read bill of fare*. MARLOW *gently takes it from his hand.*)

MAR. (C., *perusing*). What's here? For the first course, for the second course, for the dessert. The devil! sir, do you think we have brought down the whole Joiner's company, or the corporation of Bedford? Two or three little things, clean and comfortable, will do.

HAST. But let's hear it.

MAR. (*reading*). "For the first course at the top, a pig's face and prune sauce."

HAST. Damn your pig, I say.

MAR. Damn your prune sauce, say I.

HARD. (R., *aside*). And damn your delicate stomachs, say I. (*Aloud.*) And yet, gentlemen, to men that are hungry, pig with prune sauce is very good eating.

MAR. (*reading*). "Item; a calf's head and brains."

HAST. Oh, knock out your brains; I don't like 'em.

MAR. Let them be buttered and laid on a plate by themselves.

HARD. (*aside*). If your brains were knocked out, a very small plate would hold them. (*Aloud.*) But, gentlemen, you are my guests; make what alterations you please. Is there anything else you wish to retrench or alter, gentlemen?

MAR. (*reading*). "Item; a pork pie and boiled rabbit and sausages, a florentine, a shaking pudding, and a dish of tiff-taf-ferty cream."

HAST. Confound your made dishes. I'm for plain eating.

HARD. I'm sorry, gentlemen, that I have nothing you like; but if there be anything you have a particular fancy to—

MAR. Why, really, sir, your bill of fare is so exquisite that any one part of it is full as good as another. Send us what you please. So much for supper. And now to see that our beds are aired, and luggage properly taken care of.

HARD. I entreat you'll leave all that to me. You shall not stir a step.

MAR. Leave that to you! I protest, sir, you must excuse me, I always look to these things myself.

HARD. I must insist, sir, you'll make yourself easy on that head. (*Going toward R. 2 E. to give orders.*)

MAR. (*with a passionate outburst of voice*). You see I'm resolved on it. (*Aside, pushing HARDCASTLE out of his way and crossing to R. 2 E.*) A very troublesome fellow this, as ever I met with.

Exit R. 2 E.

HARD. (*aside*). This may be modern modesty, but damn me if I ever saw anything look so like old-fashioned impudence.

Exit R. 2 E.

HAST. (C.). So, I find this fellow's civilities begin to grow troublesome. But who can be angry at those assiduities which are meant to please him? (*Looks off L.*) Ha! what do I see? Miss Neville, by all that's happy!

Enter MISS NEVILLE, L. 2 E.

MISS N. My dear Hastings! To what unexpected good fortune, to what accident am I to ascribe this happy meeting?

HAST. Let me ask the same question, as I could never have hoped to meet my dearest Constance at an inn.

MISS N. (L. C.). An inn! You mistake; my aunt, my guardian, lives here. What could induce you to think this house an inn?

HAST. (R. C.). My friend, Mr. Marlow, with whom I came down, and I, have been sent here as to an inn, I assure you. A young fellow, whom we accidentally met at a house hard by, directed us hither.

MISS N. Certainly it must be one of my hopeful cousin's

tricks, of whom you have heard me talk so often. Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !

HAST. He whom your aunt intends for you? He of whom I have such just apprehensions?

MISS N. You have nothing to fear from him, I assure you. You'd adore him if you knew how heartily he despises me. My aunt knows it too, and has undertaken to court me for him, and actually begins to think she has made a conquest.

HAST. You must know, my Constance, I have just seized this happy opportunity of my friend's visit here, to get admittance into the family. The horses that carried us down are now fatigued with the journey, but they'll soon be refreshed; and then, if my dearest girl will trust to her faithful Hastings, we shall soon be out of their power.

MISS N. I have often told you that, though ready to obey you, I yet should leave my little fortune behind with reluctance. The greatest part of it was left me by my uncle, the India director, and chiefly consists in jewels. I have been for some time persuading my aunt to let me wear them. I fancy I'm very near succeeding. The instant they are put into my possession you shall find me ready to make them and myself yours.

HAST. Perish the baubles! Your person is all I desire. In the meantime, my friend Marlow must not be let into his mistake. I know the strange reserve of his temper is such, that if abruptly informed of it, he would instantly quit the house before our plan was ripe for execution.

MISS N. But how shall we keep him in the deception? Miss Hardcastle is just returned from walking; what if we persuade him she has come to this house as to an inn? Come this way.
(*They confer up stage.*)

Enter MARLOW, R. 2 E.

MAR. (C.). The assiduities of these good people tease me beyond bearing. My host seems to think it ill manners to leave me alone, and so he claps not only himself but his old-fashioned wife on my back. They talk of coming to sup with us too; and then, I suppose, we are to run the gauntlet through all the rest of the family. (*He turns and sees MISS NEVILLE for the first time. He becomes so nervous and bashful that he quite loses his head, and attempts to go off at R. 2 E., but HASTINGS dashes after him and pulls him back by the coat-tail,*

and during the entire scene that follows he never once looks Miss NEVILLE in the face.) What have we got here?

HAST. My dear Charles! Let me congratulate you — the most fortunate accident! Whom do you think is just alighted?

MAR. (R.). Cannot guess.

HAST. (C.). Our mistresses, boy; Miss Hardcastle and Miss Neville. Give me leave to introduce Miss Constance Neville to your acquaintance. (*MISS NEVILLE comes down L.*) Happening to dine in the neighborhood, they called on their return to take fresh horses here. Miss Hardcastle has just stepped into the next room, and will be back in an instant. Wasn't it lucky, eh?

MAR. (*aside*). I have just been mortified enough of all conscience, and here comes something to complete my embarrassment.

HAST. Well, but wasn't it the most fortunate thing in the world?

MAR. Oh, yes, very fortunate — a most joyful encounter! But our dresses, George, you know, are in disorder. What if we should postpone the happiness till to-morrow? To-morrow at her own house? It will be every bit as convenient, and rather more respectful. To-morrow let it be. (*Offering to go, but is stopped by HASTINGS, who gets between him and the door, R. 2 E.*)

MISS N. By no means, sir. Your ceremony will displease her. The disorder of your dress will show the ardor of your impatience. Besides, she knows you are in the house, and will permit you to see her.

MAR. (*aside, C.*). Oh, the devil she will! How shall I support it? Hem! hem! Hastings, you must not go. You are to assist me, you know. I shall be confoundedly ridiculous.

HAST. (R. C.). Pshaw, man! it's but the first plunge, and all's over. She's but a woman, you know.

MAR. And of all women, she that I most dread to encounter. (*Down R.*)

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, C. *from L., as returning from walking, with a bonnet, etc.* Business of HASTINGS greeting MISS HARDCASTLE.

HAST. (*introducing him*). Miss Hardcastle, Mr. Marlow. I'm proud of bringing two persons of such merit together,

that only want to know, to esteem each other. (*Down R. to MARLOW, leaving his hat upon the table.*)

MISS H. (*aside, at C.; MISS NEVILLE at L. of her*). Now for meeting my modest gentleman. (*After a pause, in which he appears very uneasy and disconcerted; aloud.*) I'm glad of your safe arrival, sir. I'm told you had some accidents by the way.

MAR. (R. C.). Only a few, madam. Yes, we had some. Yes, madam, a good many accidents, but should be sorry, madam—or rather, glad of any accidents—that are so agreeably concluded. Hem!

HAST. (R., to MARLOW). You never spoke better in your whole life. Keep it up, and I'll insure you the victory.

MISS H. I'm afraid you flatter, sir. You that have seen so much of the finest company can find little entertainment in an obscure corner of the country.

MAR. (*gathering courage*). I have lived —

HAST. (*interrupting*). Ahem!

MAR. Well, George, I *have* lived in the world, but I have kept little company. I have been an observer upon life, madam, while others were enjoying it.

HAST. (*aside to MARLOW*). Cicero never spoke better. Once more, and you are confirmed in assurance forever.

MAR. (*aside to HASTINGS*). Hem! Stand by me then, and when I'm down, throw in a word or two to set me up again.

MISS H. An observer, like you, upon life were, I fear, disagreeably employed, since you must have had much more to censure than to approve.

MAR. Pardon me, madam, I was always willing to be amused. The folly of most people is rather an object of mirth than uneasiness.

HAST. (*aside to MARLOW*). Bravo, bravo! Never spoke so well in your whole life. (*Aloud.*) Well, Miss Hardcastle, I see that you and Mr. Marlow are going to be very good company. I believe our being here will but embarrass the interview.

(MISS NEVILLE *steps across behind MISS HARDCASTLE, and crosses down stage between MARLOW and HASTINGS; and during the following speech MARLOW, reaching behind him, plucks nervously at her gown as he stares at the ground, thinking she is HASTINGS.*)

MAR. Not in the least, Mr. Hastings. We like your company of all things. (*Aside to HASTINGS.*) Damn it, George! (*Looks up at this word, discovers his mistake, and is completely dumfounded; he turns round, bows and stammers in his confusion, while HASTINGS takes MISS NEVILLE on his arm and makes a hasty exit with her at R. 2 E. Aside.*) What the devil shall I do? (*Aloud.*) Will you please be seated, madam? (*Brings a chair down and sits; pauses, sees MISS HARDCASTLE still standing, rises, puts his hat on a chair, while he brings another down for her. They both sit; MARLOW, R., MISS HARDCASTLE, L. During the following scene MARLOW draws his chair away little by little towards the R. MISS HARDCASTLE moves her chair every time MARLOW moves his until he gets to R. wing. When he cannot move any farther, he looks stupidly at MISS HARDCASTLE and then at the wing.*) I say, ma'am —

MISS H. Sir!

MAR. I am afraid, ma'am, I am not so happy as to make myself agreeable to the ladies — (*Moves his chair to R.*)

MISS H. The ladies, I should hope, have employed some part of your addresses. (*Moves after him.*)

MAR. (*relapsing into timidity*). Pardon me, madam, I — I — I — as yet have studied — only — to — deserve them. (*Moves to R. again.*)

MISS H. And that, some say, is the very worst way to obtain them. (*Moves after him.*)

MAR. Perhaps so, madam. But I love to converse only with the more grave and sensible part of the sex — But I'm afraid I grow tiresome. (*Moves R. again.*)

MISS H. Not at all, sir; there is nothing I like so much as grave conversation myself; I could hear it forever. Indeed, I have often been surprised how a man of sentiment could ever admire those light, airy pleasures, where nothing reaches the heart. (*Moves after him.*)

MAR. It's — a disease — of the mind, madam. In the variety of tastes there must be some who, wanting a relish — for — um — a — um. (*Moves R.*)

MISS H. I understand you, sir. There must be some who, wanting a relish for refined pleasure, pretend to despise what they are incapable of tasting. (*Moves R.*)

MAR. My meaning, madam, but infinitely better expressed. And I can't help observing — a — (*Moves R.*)

MISS H. (*aside*). Who could ever suppose this gentleman

impudent upon some occasions! (*To MARLOW.*) You were going to observe, sir. (*Moves R.*)

MAR. I was observing, madam — I protest, madam, I forget what I was going to observe. (*Moves R.*)

MISS H. (*aside*). I vow and so do I. (*To MARLOW.*) You were observing, sir, that in this age of hypocrisy — something about hypocrisy, sir.

MAR. Yes, madam, in this age of hypocrisy there are few who upon strict inquiry do not — a — a — a —

MISS H. I understand you perfectly, sir.

MAR. (*aside*). Egad! and that's more than I do myself.

MISS H. You mean that in this hypocritical age there are few who do not condemn in public what they practice in private, and think they pay every debt to virtue when they praise it.

MAR. True, madam; those who have most virtue in their mouths, have least of it in their bosoms — breasts, no, no, hearts. But I'm sure I tire you, madam. (*Is confused to find himself against the wall.*)

MISS H. Not in the least, sir; there's something so agreeable and spirited in your manner, such life and force — pray, sir, go on. (*Endeavors not to laugh in his face.*)

MAR. Yes, madam, I was saying — But I see Miss Neville expecting us in the next room. I would not intrude for the world. (*Rising, putting his chair behind him in such a way as to block her exit; picks up HASTINGS'S hat, which has been left on table.*)

MISS H. (*rising and going c.*). I protest, sir, I never was more agreeably entertained in all my life.

MAR. (*R. C., looking off R.*). But she beckons us to join her. Madam, shall I do myself the honor to attend you? (*Bowing repeatedly, his hat held before him, he knocks MISS HARDCASTLE'S fan out of her hand. Stoops to pick it up and gives her his hat instead, pocketing the fan; still simpering and bowing, he stumbles over the chair, and finally offers his arm to take her off. She puts a piece of her lace scarf on it. He simpers and nods over it as if she were leaning on him, and exit quickly R. 2 E.*)

MISS H. (*R. C., looking after him*). Well, then, I'll follow. Ha! ha! ha! ha! Was there ever such a sober, sentimental interview! I'm certain he scarce looked in my face the whole time. Yet the fellow, but for his unaccountable bashfulness, is pretty well too. He has good sense, but then so buried in his fears, that it fatigues one more than ignorance. If I

could teach him a little confidence, it would be doing somebody that I know of a piece of service. But who is that somebody? — that, faith, is a question I can scarce answer.

Exit R. 2 E.

Enter TONY *and* MISS NEVILLE, C. *from* R.

TONY (*coming down* C.). What do you follow me for, Cousin Con? I wonder you're not ashamed to be so very engaging.

MISS N. (*following on* L.). I hope, cousin, one may speak to one's own relations, and not be to blame.

TONY. Ay, but I want to know what sort of a relation you want to make me, though; but it won't do. I tell you, cousin Con, it won't do, so I beg you'll keep your distance; I want no nearer relationship. (*He takes an apple from his pocket and is about to bite it, when* MISS NEVILLE *snatches it and* **exit** *quickly, followed by* TONY, C. *to* R.)

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE *and* HASTINGS, R. 2 E.

MRS. H. Well, I vow, Mr. Hastings, you're very entertaining. There is nothing in the world I love to talk of so much as London and the fashions, though I was never there myself.

HAST. (R.). Never there! You amaze me! From your air and manner, I concluded you had been bred all your life either at Ranelagh, St. James's (*aside*), or Tower Wharf.

MRS. H. (C.). O sir, you're only pleased to say so. We country persons can have no manner at all. I'm in love with the town, and that serves to raise me above some of our neighboring rustics; but who can have a manner that has never seen the Pantheon, the Grotto Gardens, the Borough, and such places where the nobility chiefly resort? All I can do is to enjoy London at second-hand. I take care to know every *tête-à-tête* from the *Scandalous Magazine*, and have all the fashions, as they come out, in a letter from the two Miss Rickets of Crooked-lane. Pray how do you like this head, Mr. Hastings?

HAST. Extremely elegant and *dégagée*, upon my word, madam. Your *friseur* is a Frenchman, I suppose?

MRS. H. I protest I dressed it myself from a print in the ladies' memorandum book for the last year.

HAST. Indeed! Such a head in a side-box at the play house would draw as many gazers as my Lady Mayoress at a city ball.

MRS. H. I vow, since inoculation began, there is no such thing to be seen as a plain woman; so one must dress a little particular, or one may escape in a crowd.

HAST. Intolerable! At your age you may wear what you please, and it must become you.

MRS. H. Pray, Mr. Hastings, what do you take to be the most fashionable age about town?

HAST. Some time ago forty was all the mode; but I'm told the ladies intend to bring up fifty for the ensuing winter.

MRS. H. Seriously? Then I shall be too young for the fashion.

Re-enter TONY and MISS NEVILLE, C. from R. *She follows him down L., hectoring him.*

HAST. No lady begins to put on jewels now till she's past forty. For instance, Miss there, in a polite circle, would be considered as a child, a mere maker of samplers.

MRS. H. And yet my niece thinks herself as much a woman, and is as fond of jewels, as the oldest of us all.

HAST. Your niece, is she? And that young gentleman, a brother of yours, I should presume?

MRS. H. My son, sir. They are contracted to each other. Observe their little sports. They quarrel and make it up again ten times a day, as if they were man and wife already. (*To them.*) Well, Tony, child, what soft things are you saying to your Cousin Constance this evening?

TONY (L.). I have been saying no soft things; but that it's very hard to be followed about so. Ecod, I've not a place in the house now that's left to myself but the stable.

MRS. H. (R. C.). Never mind him, Con, my dear. He's in another story behind your back.

MISS N. (L. C.). There's something generous in my cousin's manner. He falls out before faces to be forgiven in private.

TONY. That's a damned, confounded — crack.

MRS. H. Don't you think they are like each other about the mouth, Mr. Hastings?

HAST. Very like.

MRS. H. The Blenkinsop mouth to a T. They're of a

size too. Back to back, my pritties, that Mr. Hastings may see you. (MISS NEVILLE comes down, pulling TONY forward.)

TONY. You had as good not make me, I can tell you.

(MRS. HARDCASTLE pulls TONY toward MISS NEVILLE, and makes them stand back to back to be measured. He knocks his head roughly against MISS NEVILLE'S. She screams and crosses to R., rubbing her head.)

MRS. H. (L. C.). For shame, Tony! You a man, and behave so!

TONY (C.). If I'm a man, let me have my fortin. Ecod! I'll not be made a fool of any longer.

MRS. H. Is this, ungrateful boy, all that I'm to get for the pains I've taken in your education? Didn't I rock you in a cradle?

TONY. Well, you wouldn't rock me in a coal scuttle, would you?

MRS. H. Didn't I feed that pretty mouth with a spoon?

TONY. Well, you didn't want to feed it with a fire shovel, did you?

MRS. H. Didn't I work that waistcoat and those ruffles to make you look genteel?

TONY (*rubbing his wrist across his mouth and grimacing*). Well, ain't I genteel? Ecod! I tell you I'll not be made a fool of any longer.

MRS. H. Wasn't it all for your good, viper? Wasn't it all for your good?

TONY. I wish you'd let me and my good alone, then. Snubbing this way, when I'm in spirits. If I'm to have any good, let it come of itself; not to keep dingling it, dingling it into one so.

MRS. H. That's false; I never see you when you're in spirits. No, Tony, you then go to the alehouse or kennel. I'm never to be delighted with your agreeable, wild notes, unfeeling monster!

TONY. Ecod! mamma, your own notes are the wildest of the two.

(Leaps astride chair at L., and rides as if racing, snapping his whip over the back of the chair as if at an imaginary horse.)

MRS. H. Was ever the like! But I see he wants to

break my heart; I see he does. (*She cries, and TONY mimics her.*)

HAST. (*to c.*). Dear madam, permit me to lecture the young gentleman a little. I'm certain I can persuade him to his duty.

MRS. H. (*R. C.*). Well! I must retire. Come, Constance, my love. You see, Mr. Hastings, the wretchedness of my situation; was ever poor woman so plagued with a dear, sweet, pretty (*TONY makes ill-natured faces and laughs nastily at her*), provoking, undutiful boy!

Exit, R. 2 E., followed by MISS NEVILLE, who has been watching the scene with an amused but demure face.

TONY (*singing*).

“There was a young man riding by,
And fain would have his will.
Twang-to-dillo-dell” —

Don't mind her; let her cry. It's the comfort of her heart. I have seen her and sister cry over a book for an hour together, and they said they liked the book the more it made them cry.

HAST. (*C.*). Then you're no friend to the ladies, I find, my pretty young gentleman?

TONY. That's as I find 'um.

HAST. Not to her of your mother's choosing, I dare answer? And yet she appears to be a pretty, well-tempered girl.

TONY. That's because you don't know her as well as I. Ecod! I know every inch about her; and there's not a more cantankerous toad in all Christendom.

HAST. (*aside*). Pretty encouragement this for a lover!

TONY. I have seen her since the height of that. She has as many tricks as a hare in a thicket, or a colt the first day's breaking.

HAST. To me she appears sensible and silent.

TONY. Ay, before company. But when she's with her playmates she's as loud as a hog in a gate.

HAST. Well, but you must allow her a little beauty. Yes, you must allow her some beauty.

TONY. Bandbox! She's all a made-up thing, mun. Ah! could you but see Bet Bouncer of these parts, you might then talk of beauty. Ecod! she has two eyes as black as sloes,

and cheeks as broad and red as a pulpit cushion. She would make two of she.

HAST. Well, what say you to a friend that would take this bitter bargain off your hands?

TONY. Anon?

HAST. Would you thank him, that would take Miss Neville, and leave you to happiness and your dear Betsey?

WARN curtain.

TONY. Ay; but where is there such a friend, for who would take her?

HAST. I am he. If you but assist me, I'll engage to whip her off to France, and you shall never hear more of her.

TONY. Assist you? (*Leaps off the chair, and meets HASTINGS at C.*) Ecod, I will to the last drop of my blood. I'll clap a pair of horses to your chaise, that shall trundle you off in a twinkling, and may be get you part of her fortin beside, in jewels, that you little dream of.

HAST. My dear squire, this looks like a lad of spirit.

TONY. Come along, then, and you shall see more of my spirit before you have done with me.

RING curtain.

Exeunt, arm in arm, L. 2 E. ; TONY *singing*.

“We are the boys
That fear no noise
When the thundering cannon roars” —

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT III.

Scene. — *The same room in HARDCASTLE'S house.*

READY a jewel casket, piece
of string and cup and ball,
at R. U. E. Bunch of
keys at L. 2 E.

Enter HARDCASTLE, R. 2 E.

HARD. (C.). What could my old friend, Sir Charles, mean by recommending his son as the modestest young man in town? To me he appears the most impudent piece of brass that ever spoke with a tongue. He has taken possession of the easy-chair by the fireside already. He took off his boots in the parlor, and desired me to see them taken care of. I'm desirous to know how his impudence affects my daughter. She will certainly be shocked at it.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, *plainly dressed*, L. 2 E.

Well, my Kate, I see you have changed your dress as I bid you; and yet, I believe, there was no great occasion.

MISS H. (L. c.). I find such a pleasure, sir, in obeying your commands, that I take care to observe them without ever debating their propriety.

HARD. And yet, Kate, I sometimes give you some cause, particularly when I recommended my modest gentleman to you as a lover to-day.

MISS H. You taught me to expect something extraordinary, and I find the original exceeds the description.

HARD. I was never so surprised in all my life! He has quite confounded all my faculties!

MISS H. I never saw anything like it; and a man of the world too?

HARD. Ay, he learned it all abroad. What a fool was I, to think a young man could learn modesty by travelling. He might as soon learn wit at a masquerade.

MISS H. It seems all natural to him.

HARD. A good deal assisted by bad company and a French dancing-master.

MISS H. Sure you mistake, papa! A French dancing-

master could never have taught him that timid look — that awkward address — that bashful manner —

HARD. Whose look? Whose manner, child?

MISS H. Mr. Marlow's. His *mauvaise honte*, his timidity, struck me at the first sight.

HARD. Then your first sight deceived you; for I think him one of the most brazen first sights that ever astonished my senses.

MISS H. Sure, sir, you rally? I never saw any one so modest.

HARD. And can you be serious? I never saw such a bouncing, swaggering puppy since I was born. Bully Dawson was but a fool to him.

MISS H. Surprising! He met me with a respectful bow, a stammering voice, and a look fixed on the ground.

HARD. He met me with a loud voice, a lordly air, and a familiarity that froze me to death.

MISS H. He treated me with diffidence and respect; censured the manners of the age; admired the prudence of the girl that never laughed; tired me with apologies for being tiresome; then left the room with a bow, and, "Madam, I would not detain you." (*Mimicking* MARLOW.)

HARD. He spoke to me as if he knew me all his life before. Asked twenty questions, and never waited for an answer. Interrupted my best remarks with some silly pun, and when I was talking of the Duke of Marlborough and my friend Brooks, he asked if I was not a good hand at making punch. Yes, Kate, he asked your father if he was not a maker of punch!

MISS H. One of us must certainly be mistaken.

HARD. In one thing, however, we are agreed — to reject him.

MISS H. Yes. But upon conditions. For if you should find him less impudent, and I more presuming; if you find him more respectful, and I more importunate — I don't know — the man is well enough for a man — certainly he has a very passable complexion.

HARD. If we should find him so — but that's impossible. The first appearance has done my business; I'm seldom deceived in that.

MISS H. Then as one of us must be mistaken, what if we go to make further discoveries?

HARD. Agreed. But, depend on't, I'm in the right.

MISS H. And depend on't I'm not much in the wrong.

Exeunt MISS HARDCASTLE at L. 2 E., and HARDCASTLE at R. 2 E., each shaking a finger at the other as they go out.

Enter TONY, running in with a casket, C. from R.

TONY. Ecod! I have got them. Here they are. My cousin Con's necklaces, bobs and all. My mother sha'n't cheat the poor souls out of their fortin neither. (*Takes two or three halfpence out of his pocket and begins tossing and catching them.*)

Enter HASTINGS, L. 2 E.

Oh, my genus, is that you?

HAST. (L. C.). My dear friend, how have you managed with your mother? I hope you have amused her with pretending love for your cousin, and that you are willing to be reconciled at last; we shall be ready to set off in a short time.

TONY (R.). And here's something to bear your charges by the way. (*Giving the casket.*) Your sweetheart's jewels. Keep them, and hang those, I say, that would rob you of one of them. (*Takes string from his pocket and plays at cat's-cradle.*)

HAST. But how have you procured them from your mother?

TONY. Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no fibs. I procured them by the rule of thumb. If I had not a key to every drawer in mother's bureau, how could I go to the ale-house so often as I do? An honest man may rob himself of his own at any time.

HAST. Thousands do it every day. But, to be plain with you, Miss Neville is endeavoring to procure them from her aunt this very instant. If she succeeds, it will be the most delicate way at least of obtaining them.

(*During the following speeches TONY is always occupied with business. He tips two chairs down in front of table, R., and attaches his cat's-cradle string to them for reins. Then draws the lighted candles, one on one corner and the other on opposite corner of the table, to serve as coach lamps.*)

TONY. Well, keep them, till you know how it will be.

But I know how it will be well enough, she'd as soon part with the only sound tooth in her head.

HAST. But I dread the effects of her resentment, when she finds she has lost them.

TONY. Never you mind her resentment; leave me to manage that. I don't value her resentment the bounce of a cracker. Zounds! here they are. (*Leaps on table between candles and pretends to drive at a great pace.*) Morrice! Prance!

Exit HASTINGS, L. 2 E.

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE and MISS NEVILLE, R. 2 E. *As they come on, TONY jumps from table, and pulling cup and ball out of his pocket, begins to play up c.*

MRS. H. (*down R.*). Indeed, Constance, you amaze me; such a girl as you want jewels! It will be time enough for jewels, my dear, these twenty years hence, when your beauty begins to want repairs.

MISS N. (*at fireplace, L.*). But what will repair beauty at forty, will certainly improve it at twenty, madam.

MRS. H. Yours, my dear, can admit of none. That natural blush is beyond a thousand ornaments. Besides, child, jewels are quite out at present. Don't you see half the ladies of our acquaintance, my Lady Kill-day-light, and Mrs. Crump, and the rest of them, carry their jewels to town, and bring nothing but paste and marcasites back?

MISS N. But who knows, madam, but somebody that shall be nameless would like me best with all my little finery about me?

MRS. H. Consult your glass, my dear, and then see if, with such a pair of eyes, you want any better sparklers. What do you think, Tony, my dear. (*At this moment TONY strikes himself on the nose with his ball. Business of rubbing it, and holding on to it.*) Does your cousin Con want any jewels in your eyes, to set off her beauty?

TONY (R. C.). That's as hereafter may be.

MISS N. My dear aunt, if you knew how it would oblige me —

MRS. H. A parcel of old fashioned rose and table cut things. They would make you look like the court of King Solomon at a puppet-show. Besides, I believe I can't readily come at them. They may be missing for aught I know to the contrary.

TONY (*aside to Mrs. HARDCASTLE*). Then why don't you tell her so at once, as she's so longing for them? Tell her they're lost. It's the only way to quiet her. Say they are lost, and call me to bear witness.

MRS. H. (*aside to TONY*). You know, my dear, I'm only keeping them for you. So, if I say they're gone, you'll bear me witness, will you? He! he! he!

TONY. Never fear me. Ecod! I'll say I saw them taken out with my own eyes.

MISS N. I desire them but for a day, madam. Just to be permitted to show them as relics, and then they may be locked up again.

MRS. H. To be plain with you, my dear Constance, if I could find them, you should have them. They're missing, I assure you. Lost, for aught I know. But we must have patience wherever they are.

MISS N. I'll not believe it; this is but a shallow pretence to deny me. I know they're too valuable to be so slightly kept, and as you are to answer for the loss—

MRS. H. Don't be alarmed, Constance. If they be lost, I must restore an equivalent. But my son knows they're missing and not to be found.

TONY. That I can bear witness to. They are missing, and not to be found, I'll take my oath on't. Besides, what's the odds? Mother's got to give the equal-phant.

MRS. H. You must learn resignation, my dear; for though we lose our fortune, yet we should not lose our patience. See me, how calm I am.

TONY. Yes, see how calm I am.

MISS N. Ay, people are generally calm at the misfortunes of others.

MRS. H. Now, I wonder a girl of your good sense should waste a thought upon such trumpery. We shall soon find them, and in the meantime you shall make use of my garnets till your jewels be found.

MISS N. I detest garnets.

MRS. H. The most becoming things in the world to set off a clear complexion. You have often seen how well they looked upon me. You shall have them.

Exit R. 2 E.

MISS N. I dislike them of all things. You sha'n't stir.

Was ever anything so provoking — to mislay my own jewels, and force me to wear trumpery!

TONY (c.). Don't be a fool. If she gives you the garnets, take what you can get. The jewels are your own already. I have stolen them out of her bureau, and she does not know it. Fly to your spark, he'll tell you more of the matter. Leave me to manage her.

MISS N. (*comes down to L. of TONY in surprise*). My dear cousin!

(MRS. HARDCASTLE *screams* R. 2 E.)

TONY. Vanish. She's here, and has missed them already. Zounds! how she fidgets and spits about like a Catharine wheel.

Exit MISS NEVILLE, L. 2 E.

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE, R. 2 E.

MRS. H. Confusion! thieves! robbers! We are cheated, plundered, broke open, undone. (*At c., wringing her hands.*)

TONY (R.). What's the matter, what's the matter, mamma? I hope nothing has happened to any of the good family?

MRS. H. We are robbed. My bureau has been broke open, the jewels taken out, and I'm undone.

TONY. Oh! is that all? Ha! ha! ha! By the laws, I never saw it better acted in my life. Ecod, I thought you was ruined in earnest, ha! ha! ha!

MRS. H. Why, boy, I am ruined in earnest. My bureau has been broke open, and all taken away.

TONY. Stick to that; ha! ha! ha! stick to that; I'll bear witness, you know; call me to bear witness.

MRS. H. I tell you, Tony, by all that's precious, the jewels are gone, and I shall be ruined forever.

TONY. Sure I know they're gone, and I am to say so.

MRS. H. My dearest Tony, but hear me. They're gone, I say.

TONY. By the laws, mamma, you make me for to laugh, ha! ha! I know who took them well enough, ha! ha! ha!

MRS. H. (R. C.). Was there ever such a blockhead, that can't tell the difference between jest and earnest. I tell you I'm not in jest, booby. (*Shaking him.*)

TONY. That's right, that's right; you must be in a bitter passion, and then nobody will suspect either of us. I'll bear witness that they are gone. (*Breaks away to L. C.*)

MRS. H. Was there ever such a cross-grained brute, that won't hear me? Can you bear witness that you're no better

than a fool? Was ever poor woman so beset with fools on the one hand, and thieves on the other!

TONY. I can bear witness to that.

MRS. H. Bear witness again, you blockhead you, and I'll turn you out of the room directly. My poor niece, what will become of her? (TONY *laughs*.) Do you laugh, you unfeeling brute, as if you enjoyed my distress?

TONY. I can bear witness to that.

MRS. H. Do you insult me, monster? I'll teach you to vex your mother, I will. Here, thieves, thieves, thieves, thieves!

(Runs at TONY, who dodges her, running round the furniture, and finally off R. 2 E.; MRS. HARDCASTLE, following him, puffing and blowing.)

Exeunt both, R. 2 E.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE *and* MAID, L. 2 E.

MISS H. (C.). What an unaccountable creature is that brother of mine, to send them to the house as an inn. Ha! ha! I don't wonder at his impudence.

MAID (L.). But what is more, madam, the young gentleman, as you passed by in your present dress, asked me if you were the bar-maid? He mistook you for a bar-maid, madam.

MISS H. Did he? Then, as I live, I'm resolved to keep up the delusion. Tell me, Dolly, how do you like my present dress?

MAID. It's the dress, madam, that every lady wears in the country but when she visits or receives company.

MISS H. And are you sure he does not remember my face or person?

MAID. Certain of it.

MISS H. I vow I thought so; for though we spoke for some time together, yet his fears were such that he never once looked up during the interview.

MAID. But what do you hope for from keeping him in his mistake?

MISS H. In the first place, I shall be seen, and that is no small advantage to a girl who brings her face to market. But my chief aim is to take my gentleman off his guard, and, like an invincible champion of romance, examine the giant's force before I offer to combat.

MAID. But are you sure you can act your part, and dis-

guise your voice so that he may mistake that, as he has already mistaken your person?

MISS H. Never fear me. I think I have got the true bar cant. (*Business of mimicking bar-maid's manner.*) Did your honor call? Attend the Lion, there! Pipes and tobacco for the Angel! The Lamb has been outrageous this half hour.

MAID. It will do, madam. But he's here.

Exit L. 2 E.

Enter MARLOW, R. 2 E.

MAR. (R.). What a bawling in every part of the house! I have scarce a moment's repose. If I go to the best room, there I find my host and his story. If I fly to the gallery, there we have my hostess with her curtsy down to the ground. I have at last got a moment to myself, and now for recollection. (*Walks to and fro R. to C., and muses.*)

MISS H. (L.). Did you call, sir? Did your honor call?

MAR. (*musing*). As for Miss Hardcastle, she's too grave and sentimental for me.

MISS H. Did your honor call?

(*She places herself before him, curtsying, he turning away.*)

MAR. No, child. (*Musing.*) Besides, from the glimpse I had of her, I think she squints.

MISS H. I am sure, sir, I heard the bell ring.

MAR. No, no. (*Musing.*) I have pleased my father, however, by coming down, and I'll to-morrow please myself by returning. (*Taking out his tablets and perusing them.*)

MISS H. Perhaps the other gentleman called, sir?

MAR. No, no, I tell you. (*Looks casually at her, then turns and looks her full in the face, with a pleased expression.*) Yes, child, I think I did call. I wanted — I wanted — I vow, child, you are vastly handsome.

MISS H. (*curtsying at L.*). Oh, la, sir, you'll make one ashamed.

MAR. (C.). Never saw a more sprightly malicious eye. Yes, yes, my dear, I did call. Have you got any of your — what d'ye call it, in the house?

MISS H. No, sir, we have been out of that these ten days.

MAR. One may call in this house, I find, to very little purpose. Suppose I should call for a taste, just by way of

trial, of the nectar of your lips; perhaps I might be disappointed in that, too. (*Approaching her, to L. C.*)

MISS H. (*stepping back innocently*). Nectar! nectar! That's a liquor there's no call for in these parts. French, I suppose. We keep no French wines here, sir.

MAR. Of true English growth, I assure you.

MISS H. Then it's odd I should not know it. We brew all sorts of wines in this house, and I have lived here these eighteen years.

MAR. Eighteen years! Why one would think, child, you kept the bar before you were born. How old are you?

MISS H. Oh, sir, I must not tell my age. They say women and music should never be dated.

MAR. To guess at this distance you can't be much above forty. (*Approaching to L.*) Yet nearer, I don't think so much. By coming close to some women they look younger still; but when we come very close indeed —

(*At L., attempting to kiss her.*)

MISS H. (*evading him, crosses to R.*). Pray, sir, keep your distance. One would think you wanted to know one's age as they do horses, by mark of mouth.

MAR. (*L.*). I protest, child, you use me extremely ill. If you keep me at this distance, how is it possible you and I can be ever acquainted?

MISS H. And who wants to be acquainted with you? I want no such acquaintance, not I. I'm sure you did not treat Miss Hardcastle in this obstropolous manner. I'll warrant me, before her you looked dashed, and kept bowing to the ground, and talked for all the world as if you were a justice of the peace.

MAR. (*aside*). Egad! she has hit it, sure enough. (*To MISS HARDCASTLE.*) In awe of her, child? Ha! ha! ha! A mere awkward, squinting thing; no, no, I find you don't know me. I laughed, and rallied her a little; but I was unwilling to be too severe. No, I could not be too severe, curse me!

MISS H. Oh! then, sir, you are a favorite, I find, among the ladies?

MAR. (*to C.*). Yes, my dear, a great favorite; and yet, hang me, I don't see what they find in me to follow. At the ladies' club in town, I am called their agreeable Rattle. Rattle, child, is not my real name, but one I'm known by. My name is Jenkins. Mr. Jenkins, my dear, at your service.

(*At R., offering to salute her.*)

MISS H. Hold, sir; you were introducing me to your club, not to yourself. And you're so great a favorite there you say?

MAR. Yes, my dear. There's Mrs. Mantrap, Lady Betty Blackleg, the Countess of Cog, Mrs. Longhorns, old Miss Biddy Buckskin, and your humble servant, keep up the spirit of the place.

WARN curtain.

MISS H. Then it's a very merry place, I suppose?

MAR. Yes, as merry as cards, suppers, wine, and old women can make us.

MISS H. And their agreeable Rattle, ha! ha! ha!

MAR. (*aside*). Egad! I don't quite like this chit. She looks knowing, methinks. You laugh, child?

MISS H. I can't but laugh to think what time they all have for minding their work or their family.

MAR. (*aside*). All's well, she don't laugh at me. (*To MISS HARDCASTLE.*) Do you ever work, child?

MISS H. Ay, sure. There's not a screen or a quilt in the whole house but what can bear witness to that.

MAR. Odso! Then you must show me your embroidery. I embroider and draw patterns myself a little. If you want a judge of your work, you must apply to me.

(*Seizing her hand.*)

MISS H. Ay, but the colors don't look well by candle-light.

(*Struggling.*)

RING curtain.

(MARLOW attempts to put his arms around her. She avoids him, and tries to escape R. 2 E. At that moment HARDCASTLE enters R. 2 E., just in time to get the embrace intended for MISS HARDCASTLE. HARDCASTLE starts in surprise. MISS HARDCASTLE runs off laughing, R. 2 E. MARLOW gives HARDCASTLE an impudent look, crosses to L. 2 E., and goes off singing, with an air of conquest. HARDCASTLE is lost in amazement, imitates MARLOW's strut and song, and then goes off in disgust, R. 2 E.)

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

Scene. — *The same room in* **HARDCASTLE'S** *house.*

READY broom and letter,
and bunch of keys, **L. 2 E.**

Enter **MARLOW**, *followed by a* **SERVANT**, **R. 2 E.**

MAR. (C.). I wonder what Hastings could mean by sending me so valuable a thing as a casket to keep for him, when he knows the only place I have is the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door. Have you deposited the casket with the landlady, as I ordered you? Have you put it into her own hands?

SER. (R.). Yes, your honor.

MAR. She said she'd keep it safe, did she?

SER. Yes, she said she'd keep it safe enough; she asked me how I came by it, and she said she had a great mind to make me give an account of myself.

Exit **SERVANT**, **R. 2 E.**

MAR. Ha! ha! ha! They're safe, however. What an unaccountable set of beings have we got amongst! This little barmaid, though, runs in my head most strangely, and drives out the absurdities of all the rest of the family. She's mine — she must be mine, or I'm greatly mistaken.

Enter **HASTINGS**, **L. 2 E.**

HAST. (L.). Marlow here, and in spirits, too!

MAR. (R.). Give me joy, George! Crown me, shadow me with laurels! Well, George, after all, we modest fellows don't want for success among the women.

HAST. Some women you mean. But what success has your honor's modesty been crowned with now, that it grows so insolent upon us?

MAR. Didn't you see the tempting, brisk, lively little thing that runs about the house with a bunch of keys to its girdle?

HAST. Well, and what then?

MAR. She's mine, you rogue, you. Such fire, such mo-

tion, such eyes, such lips — but, egad ! she would not let me kiss them, though.

HAST. But how can you, Charles, go about to rob a woman of her honor? (*Sits L.*)

MAR. (*leaning against table, R. C.*). Pshaw ! pshaw ! We all know the honor of a bar-maid of an inn. I don't intend to rob her, take my word for it ; there's nothing in this house I sha'n't honestly pay for.

HAST. I believe the girl has virtue.

MAR. And if she has, I should be the last man in the world that would attempt to corrupt it.

HAST. You have taken care, I hope, of the casket I sent you to lock up ? Is it in safety ?

MAR. Yes, yes ; it's safe enough. I have taken care of it. But how could you think the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door a place of safety ? Ah, numbskull ! I have taken better precautions for you than you did for yourself — I have —

HAST. What? (*Rising hurriedly, and crossing to C.*)

MAR. (*to R.*). I have sent it to the landlady to keep for you.

HAST. To the landlady ?

MAR. The landlady.

HAST. You did ?

MAR. I did. She's to be answerable for its forthcoming, you know.

HAST. Yes, she'll bring it forth, with a witness.

MAR. Wasn't I right ? I believe you'll allow that I acted prudently upon this occasion ?

HAST. (*aside*). He must not see my uneasiness.

MAR. You seem a little disconcerted though, methinks. Sure nothing has happened? (*Crosses to R. C.*)

HAST. No, nothing. Never was in better spirits in all my life. And so you left it with the landlady, who, no doubt, very readily undertook the charge ?

MAR. Rather too readily. For she not only kept the casket, but through her great precaution, was going to keep the messenger too. Ha ! ha ! ha !

HAST. Ha ! ha ! ha ! They're safe, however.

MAR. As a guinea in a miser's purse.

HAST. (*aside*). So now all hopes of fortune are at an end, and we must set off without it. (*To MARLOW.*) Well, Charles, I'll leave you to your meditations on the pretty bar-maid, and — ha ! ha ! ha ! — if you are as successful for yourself as you have been for me —

MAR. What then?

HAST. Why, then, I wish you joy with all my heart.

Exit L. 2 E.

MAR. I could wish no better for myself. (*Throws himself into armchair at R.*)

Enter HARDCASTLE, R. 2 E.

HARD. (*down R.*) I no longer know my own house. It's turned all topsy-turvy. His servants have got drunk already. I'll bear it no longer; and yet, from my respect for his father, I'll be calm. (*To MARLOW.*) Mr. Marlow, your servant. I'm your very humble servant. (*Bowing low.*)

MAR. Sir, your humble servant. (*Aside.*) What's to be the wonder now?

HARD. I believe, sir, you must be sensible, sir, that no man alive ought to be more welcome than your father's son, sir; I hope you think so?

MAR. I do from my soul, sir. I don't want much entreaty. I generally make my father's son welcome wherever he goes.

HARD. I believe you do, from my soul, sir. But though I say nothing to your own conduct, that of your servants is insufferable. Their manner of drinking is setting a very bad example in this house, I assure you.

MAR. I protest, my very good sir, that's no fault of mine. If they don't drink as they ought, they are to blame. I ordered them not to spare the cellar. I did, I assure you. (*Speaking off, L. 2 E.*) Here, let one of my servants come up. (*To HARDCASTLE.*) My positive directions were, that as I did not drink myself, they should make up for my deficiencies below.

HARD. Then they had your orders for what they do! I'm satisfied. (*Crosses to fireplace.*)

MAR. They had, I assure you. You shall hear from one of themselves.

Enter SERVANT, *drunk*, L. 2 E.

You, Jeremy, come forward, sirrah! (*He obeys.*) What were my orders? Were you not told to drink freely, and call for what you thought fit, for the good of the house?

HARD. (*aside.*) I begin to lose my patience.

JER. Please, your honor, liberty and Fleet Street forever!

Though I am but a servant, I'm as good as another man. I'll drink for no man before supper, sir, dam'me! Good liquor will sit upon a good supper, but a good supper will not sit upon — hiccup — upon my conscience, sir.

Exit L. 2 E.

MAR. You see, my old friend, the fellow is as drunk as he possibly can be; I don't know what you'd have more, unless you'd have the poor devil soused in a beer-barrel.

HARD. Zounds! He'll drive me distracted if I contain myself any longer. (*Down L.*) Mr. Marlow, sir, I have submitted to your insolence for more than four hours, and I see no likelihood of its coming to an end. I'm now resolved to be master here, sir, and I desire that you and your drunken pack may leave my house directly.

MAR. Leave your house? Sure you jest, my good friend! What, when I'm doing what I can to please you?

HARD. I tell you, sir, you don't please me; so I desire you'll leave my house.

MAR. Sure you cannot be serious? At this time of night, and such a night! You only mean to banter me.

HARD. I tell you, sir, I'm serious; and now that my passions are roused, I say this house is mine, sir, this house is mine, and I command you to leave it directly.

MAR. Puddle in a storm! I sha'n't stir a step, I assure you. (*In a serious tone.*) This your house, fellow! It's my house. This is my house. Mine while I choose to stay. What right have you to bid me leave this house, sir? I never met with such impudence, curse me, never in my whole life before.

HARD. Nor I, confound me if ever I did. To come to my house, to call for what he likes, to turn me out of my own chair, to insult the family, to order his servants to get drunk, and then to tell me, "this house is mine, sir." By all that's impudent, it makes me laugh. Ha! ha! ha! Pray, sir (*bantering*), as you take the house, what think you of taking the rest of the furniture? There's a pair of silver candlesticks, and there are a set of prints, too. What think you of "The Rake's Progress" for your own apartment?

MAR. Bring me your bill, I say, and I'll leave you and your infernal house directly. (*Rising angrily.*)

HARD. (C.). Then there's a brass warming-pan, and a mahogany table that you may see your own brazen face in.

MAR. My bill, I say.

HARD. I had forgot the great chair, for your own particular slumbers, after a hearty meal.

MAR. Zounds! Bring me my bill, I say, and let's hear no more on't.

HARD. Young man, young man (*changing from passion to quiet dignity*), from your father's letter to me, I was taught to expect a well-bred modest man, as a visitor here, but now I find him no better than a coxcomb and a bully; but your father will be down here presently, and shall hear more of it.

Exit R. 2 E.

MAR. (*looking after him, perplexed*). How's this! Sure I've not mistaken the house! Everything looks like an inn. The servants cry "Coming." The attendance is awkward; the bar-maid, too, to attend us. But she's here, and will further inform me.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, L. 2 E., *crossing to R.*

Whither so fast, child? A word with you.

MISS H. Let it be short, then. I'm in a hurry.

MAR. (*leaning against table R. C.*). Pray, child, answer me one question. What are you, and what may your business in this house be?

MISS H. (C.). A relation of the family, sir.

MAR. What! A poor relation?

MISS H. Yes, sir. A poor relation appointed to keep the keys, and to see that the guests want nothing in my power to give them.

MAR. That is, you act as the bar-maid of this inn?

MISS H. Inn! Oh, law! What brought that in your head? One of the best families in the county keep an inn! Ha! ha! ha! Old Mr. Hardcastle's house an inn!

MAR. Mr. Hardcastle's house! Is this house Mr. Hardcastle's house, child?

MISS H. Ay, sure. Whose else should it be?

MAR. So, then, all's out, and I have been damnably imposed on. Oh, confound my stupid head! I shall be laughed at over the whole town. To mistake this house of all others for an inn, and my father's old friend for an inn-keeper. What a swaggering puppy must he take me for. What a silly puppy do I find myself. There again, may I be hanged, my dear, but I mistook you for the bar-maid.

MISS H. Dear me! dear me! I'm sure there's nothing in my behavior to put me upon a level with one of that stamp.

MAR. Nothing, my dear, nothing. But I was in for a list of blunders, and could not help making you a subscriber. My stupidity saw everything the wrong way. I mistook your assiduity for assurance, and your simplicity for allurements. But it's over — this house I no more show my face in.

MISS H. I hope, sir, I have done nothing to disoblige you. I'm sure I should be sorry to affront any gentleman who has been so polite, and said so many civil things to me. I'm sure I should be sorry (*pretending to cry*), if he left the family upon my account. I'm sure I should be sorry people said anything amiss, since I have no fortune but my character.

MAR. (*aside*). By heaven, she weeps! This is the first mark of tenderness I ever had from a modest woman, and it touches me.

MISS H. But I'm sure my family is as good as Miss Hardcastle's, and though I'm poor, that's no great misfortune to a contented mind; and until this moment, I never thought that it was bad to want fortune.

MAR. And why now, my pretty simplicity?

MISS H. Because it puts me at a distance from one, that if I had a thousand pound, I would give it all to.

MAR. (*aside*). This simplicity bewitches me so, that if I stay I'm undone. I must make one bold effort, and leave her. (*To her*.) Your partiality in my favor, my dear, touches me most sensibly; and were I to live for myself alone, I could easily fix my choice. But to be plain with you, the difference of our birth, fortune, and education, makes an honorable connection impossible; and I can never harbor a thought of seducing simplicity, that trusted in my honor, or bringing ruin upon one whose only fault was being too lovely.

Exit R. 2 E.

MISS H. Generous man! I never knew half his merit till now. He shall not go, if I have power or art to detain him. I'll still preserve the character in which I stooped to conquer, but will undeceive my papa, who, perhaps, may laugh him out of his resolution.

Exit L. 2 E.

Enter TONY *and* MISS NEVILLE, C. *from* R.

TONY (*down* C.). Ay, you may steal for yourselves the next time; I have done my duty. She has got the jewels again, that's a sure thing; but she believes it was all a mistake of the servants.

MISS N. (*down* L. C.). But, my dear cousin, sure you won't forsake us in this distress. If she in the least suspects that I am going off, I shall certainly be locked up, or sent to my aunt Pedigree's, which is ten times worse.

TONY. To be sure, aunts of all kinds are damned bad things. But what can I do? I have got you a pair of horses that will fly like whistlejacket, and I'm sure you can't say but I've courted you nicely before her face. Here she comes. (*Ill-naturedly.*) I suppose I must make love to you again. (*They retire up stage to fireplace, and play at cat's-cradle.* MISS NEVILLE *sits.* TONY *gets very much excited, and cries*) Candles! Candles!

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE, R. 2 E.

MRS. H. (*down* C.). Well, I was greatly fluttered, to be sure. But my son tells me it was all a mistake of the servants. I sha'n't be easy, however, till they are fairly married, and then let her keep her own fortune. (*Turns to L., and sees* MISS NEVILLE *and* TONY.) But what do I see? Fondling together, as I'm alive! I never saw Tony so sprightly before. Ah! have I caught you, my pretty doves! What, billing, exchanging stolen glances, and broken murmurs, ah!

TONY. As for murmurs, mother, we grumble a little now and then, to be sure. But there's no love lost between us.

MRS. H. A mere sprinkling, Tony, upon the flame, only to make it burn brighter.

MISS N. Cousin Tony promises to give us more of his company at home. Indeed he sha'n't leave us any more. It won't leave us, cousin Tony, will it?

(*Pretending to embrace him.*)

TONY. Oh, it's a pretty creature. No, I'd sooner leave my horse in a pound, than leave you when you smile upon one so. Your laugh makes you so becoming. (*Making a face.*)

MISS N. Agreeable cousin! Who can help admiring that natural humor, that pleasant, broad, red, thoughtless—(*Putting his check.*) Ah, it's a bold face.

MRS. H. Pretty innocence!

TONY. I'm sure I always loved cousin Con's hazel eyes, and her pretty long fingers, that she twists this way and that, over the haspicholls, like a parcel of bobbins.

MRS. H. Ah, he would charm the bird from the tree. I never was so happy before. My boy takes after his father, poor Mr. Lumpkin, exactly. The jewels, my dear Con, shall be yours incontinently. You shall have them. Isn't he a sweet boy, my dear? You shall be married to-morrow, and we'll put off the rest of his education, like Dr. Drowsey's sermons, till a fitter opportunity. *(Crosses L.)*

Enter DIGGORY, L. 2 E., *carrying a stable broom like a musket, at "shoulder arms."* A letter is stuck in the end of the broomstick.

DIG. *(marching round the room, chanting).* Where's the Squire? I have got a letter for your worship.

(Presents letter, as if shooting him.)

TONY. Give it to my mamma. She reads all my letters first.

DIG. I had orders to deliver it into your own hands.

TONY. Who does it come from?

DIG. Your worship mun ask that of the letter itself. Right about face! *(Executes order.)*

TONY (C.). Double quick march! *(Kicks DIGGORY to exit at L. 2 E.)* I could wish to know, though.

(Turning the letter and gazing on it.)

MISS N. *(rising hastily. Aside).* Undone, undone! A letter to him from Hastings. I know the hand. If my aunt sees it, we are ruined forever. I'll keep her employed a little if I can. *(Down L. of MRS. HARDCASTLE; aloud.)* But I have not told you, madam, of my cousin's smart answer just now to Mr. Marlow. We so laughed. You must know, madam—this way a little, for he must not hear us.

(Trying to engage MRS. HARDCASTLE'S attention and keep her back to TONY. They whisper together.)

TONY *(still gazing).* A damned cramp piece of penmanship as ever I saw in my life. I can read your print hand very well. But here there are such handles, and shanks, and dashes, that one can scarce tell the head from the tail. "To Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire." It's very odd, I can read the outside of my letters, where my own name is, well enough. But when I come to open it, it's all—buzz. That's

hard, very hard; for the inside of the letter is always the cream of the correspondence.

MRS. H. (*laughing at MISS NEVILLE'S narrative*). Ha! ha! ha! Very well, very well. And so my son was too hard for the philosopher?

MISS N. (*drawing MRS. HARDCASTLE up stage and watching TONY anxiously*). Yes, madam; but you must hear the rest, madam. A little more this way, or he may hear us. You'll hear how he puzzled him again.

MRS. H. (*with an eye on TONY*). He seems strangely puzzled now himself, methinks.

TONY (*still gazing*). A damned up-and-down hand, as if it was disguised in liquor. (*Reading.*) "D—R—" that stands for doctor. Then there's an S and a Q—oh—S—q—u—i—r—t—oh, Doctor Squirt. Ay, that's that. Then there's an M, and a T, and an S, but whether the next fellow be an izzard or an R, confound me, if I can tell.

MRS. H. (*coming forward, L.*). What's that, my dear? Can I give you any assistance?

MISS N. (*following, L. C., getting between MRS. HARDCASTLE and TONY*). Pray, aunt, let me read it. Nobody reads a cramp hand better than I. (*Twisting the letter from him.*) Do you know who it is from?

TONY. Can't tell, except from Dick Ginger, the feeder.

MISS N. Ay, so it is. (*Pretending to read.*) "Dear Squire. Hoping that you're in health, as I am at this present. The gentlemen of the Shake-bag club has cut the gentlemen of the Goose-green quite out of feather. The odds—um—odd battle—um—long fighting—um." Here, here, it's all about cocks and fightings; it's of no consequence—here, put it up, put it up.

(*Thrusting the crumpled letter upon him.*)

TONY. But I tell you, miss, it's of all the consequence in the world. I would not lose the rest of it for a guinea. Here, mother, do you make it out. Of no consequence!

(*Giving MRS. HARDCASTLE the letter; she comes R. C.*)

MRS. H. (*reading*). How's this?

TONY (*C., to MISS NEVILLE, L. C., who pinches him in disgust*). There, you never said a word about "How's this?"

MRS. H. (*reading*). "Dear Squire."

TONY. Oh, I thought that was Doctor Squirt.

(*Looking over.*)

MRS. H. (*reading*). "I am now waiting for Miss Neville,

with a post-chaise and pair, at the bottom of the garden, but I find my horses yet unable to perform the journey. I expect you'll assist us with a pair of fresh horses, as you promised. Despatch is necessary, as the hag" —

TONY (*with glee*). That's you!

MRS. H. (*hitting TONY a rap on the head with her fan before continuing*). Ay, the hag, "your mother, will otherwise suspect us. Yours, HASTINGS."

(*Angrily*.) Grant me patience! I shall run distracted! My rage chokes me!

MISS N. I hope, madam, you'll suspend your resentment for a few moments, and not impute to me any impertinence or sinister design that belongs to another.

MRS. H. (*curtseying very low*). Fine spoken madam, you are most miraculously polite and engaging, and quite the very pink of courtesy and circumspection, madam!

(*Changing her tone, she goes toward TONY. He retreats. She strikes him on the head with her fan.*)

TONY (*tantalizingly*). "The old hag — your mother."
(*Stands with his mouth wide open, laughing.*)

MRS. H. (*to TONY*). And you, you great ill-fashioned oaf, with scarce sense enough to keep your mouth shut (*TONY shuts his mouth suddenly*), were you, too, joined against me? But I'll defeat all your plots in a moment. (*To MISS NEVILLE*.) As for you, madam, since you have got a pair of fresh horses ready, it would be cruel to disappoint them. So, if you please, instead of running away with your spark, prepare, this very moment, to run off with me. Your old aunt Pedigree will keep you secure, I'll warrant me. You, too, sir, may mount your horse, and guard us upon the way. Here, Thomas, Roger, Diggory! I'll show you that I wish you better than you do yourselves.

Exit R. 2 E.

MISS N. (*walking excitedly up and down, L. to R.*). So now I'm completely ruined.

TONY. Ay, that's a sure thing. (*Following her; at R.*)

MISS N. What better could be expected from being connected with such a stupid fool, and after all the nods and signs I made him! (*Crosses to L.*)

TONY. By the laws, miss, it was your own cleverness, and not my stupidity, that did your business. You were so

nice and so busy with your Shake-bags, and Goose-greens, that I thought you could never be making believe.

Enter HASTINGS, L. 2 E.

HAST. (L. C.). So, sir, I find by my servant, that you have shown my letter and betrayed us. Was this well done, young gentleman?

TONY (R. C.). Here's another. Ask miss there who betrayed you. Ecod, it was her doing, not mine.

Enter MARLOW, R. 2 E.

MAR. (R.). So, I have been finely used here among you. Rendered contemptible, driven into ill-manners, despised, insulted, laughed at.

TONY. Here's another. We shall have old Bedlam broke loose presently.

MISS N. (L.). And there, sir, is the gentleman to whom we all owe every obligation.

MAR. What can I say to him, a mere booby, an idiot, whose ignorance and age are a protection.

(TONY is looking off L. MARLOW takes him by the arm and turns him round R.)

HAST. A poor, contemptible booby, that would but disgrace correction. (Turns him round L.)

MISS N. Yet with cunning and malice enough to make himself merry with all our embarrassments.

(Turns him round R.)

HAST. An insensible cub! (Turns him L.)

MAR. Replete with tricks and mischief. (Turns him R.)

TONY. Baw! dam'me, but I'll fight you both, one after the other (*sparring; as they face him he drops his fists and adds*) — with baskets.

(*Goes up, and sits at table with his head in his arms.*)

MAR. As for him, he's below resentment. But your conduct, Mr. Hastings, requires an explanation. You knew of my mistakes, yet would not undeceive me.

HAST. Tortured as I am with my own disappointments, is this a time for explanations? It is not friendly, Mr. Marlow.

MAR. But, sir —

MISS N. Mr. Marlow, we never kept on your mistake, till it was too late to undeceive you. Be pacified.

WARN curtain.

MRS. H. (*within, at R.*). Miss Neville, Constance — why, Constance, I say.

MISS N. I'm coming. Well, constancy. Remember, constancy is the word.

Exit R. 2 E.

MAR. (R. C., to TONY). You see now, young gentleman, the effects of your folly. (TONY, *his face on the table, waves his hands alternately to HASTINGS and MARLOW to pacify them.*) What might be amusement to you, is here disappointment, and even distress.

TONY (*bangs with his hands on the table as if struck by an idea. Gets up, comes down stage, C., takes each by the hand*). Ecod, I have hit it. It's here. "Your hands. Yours, and yours, my poor Sulky. My boots there, ho! Meet me two hours hence at the bottom of the garden; and if you don't find Tony Lumpkin a more good-natured fellow than you thought for, I'll give you leave to take my best horse, and Bet Bouncer into the bargain."

(*Putting an arm through HASTINGS'S arm on one side and MARLOW'S on the other, goes with them toward L. 2 E., singing.*)

RING curtain.

"For we are three jolly good fellows
Which nobody can deny
Which nobody can deny."

Exeunt R.

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT V.

Scene 1. — *Landscape in first grooves.***LIGHTS** three-quarters down.**Enter** HASTINGS, R. I E.

HAST. (R. C.). What an idiot am I to wait here for a fellow who probably takes a delight in mortifying me. He never intended to be punctual, and I'll wait no longer. What do I see? It is he, and perhaps with news of my Constance!

Enter TONY, *booted and spattered*, L. I E.

My honest Squire! I now find you a man of your word. This looks like friendship.

TONY. (L. C.). Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the world, if you knew but all. This riding by night, by-the-by, is cursedly tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage-coach.

HAST. Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with impatience.

TONY. Left them? Why, where should I leave them, but where I found them?

HAST. This is a riddle.

TONY. Riddle me this, then. What's that goes round the house, and round the house, and never touches the house?

HARD. I'm still astray.

TONY. Why, that's it, mun. I have led them astray. By jingo, there's not a pond or slough within five miles of the place but they can tell the taste of.

HAST. Ha! ha! ha! I understand; you took them in a round, while they supposed themselves going forward. And so you have at last brought them home again.

TONY. You shall hear. I first took them down Feather-bed-lane, where we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-down-hill — I then introduced them to the gibbet on Crackskull Common, and from that, with a circumbendibus, I fairly lodged them in the horse-pond at the bottom of the garden.

HAST. But no accident, I hope?

TONY. No, no; only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey,

and the cattle can scarce crawl. So if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge an inch to follow you.

HAST. (*crosses L.*). My dear friend, how can I be grateful?

TONY (*crosses R.*). Ay, now it's dear friend, noble Squire. Just now, it was all idiot, cub, and run me through the gizzard. Damn your way of fighting, I say. After we take a knock in this part of the country, we kiss and be friends. But if you had run me through the gizzard, then I should be dead, and you might go shake hands with the hangman.

HAST. The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss Neville; if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of the young one.

(*Starts to go off, L. I E. Sees MRS. HARDCASTLE approaching. Hides behind tree at L. until she is on, then exit hastily L. I E.*)

TONY. Never fear me. Here she comes. Vanish. She's got from the pond, and draggled up to the waist like a mermaid.

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE, L. I E.

MRS. H. (L.). O Tony, I'm killed. Shook, battered to death. I shall never survive it. That last jolt has done my business.

TONY (R.). Alack, mamma, it was all your own fault. You would be for running away by night, without knowing one inch of the way.

MRS. H. I wish we were at home again. I never met so many accidents in so short a journey. Drenched in the mud, overturned in a ditch, stuck fast in a slough, jolted to a jelly, and at last to lose our way! Whereabouts do you think we are, Tony?

TONY. By my guess we should be upon Heavytree Heath, about forty miles from home.

MRS. H. Oh, lud! Oh, lud! the most notorious spot in all the country. We only want a robbery to make a complete night on't.

TONY. Don't be afraid, mamma, don't be afraid. Two of the five that kept here are hanged, and the other three may not find us. Don't be afraid. Is that a man that's galloping behind us? (*Points off, L. I E.; MRS. HARDCASTLE terrified.*) No; it's only a tree. Don't be afraid.

MRS. H. The fright will certainly kill me.

TONY. Do you see anything like a black hat moving behind the thicket? (Points R. I E.)

MRS. H. (*frightened*). Oh, death!

TONY. No; it's only a cow. Don't be afraid, mother, don't be afraid.

MRS. H. As I'm alive, Tony, I see a man coming towards us. Ah! I'm sure on't. If he perceives us, we are undone.

TONY (*aside*). Father-in-law, by all that's unlucky, come to take one of his night walks! (*To her.*) Ah, it's a highwayman, with pistols as long as my leg. A damned ill-looking fellow.

MRS. H. Good Heaven defend us! He approaches.

TONY. Do you hide yourself in that thicket, and leave me to manage him. If there be any danger, I'll cough and cry "hem." When I cough be sure to keep close.

(MRS. HARDCASTLE *hides behind a tree at L. I E.*)

Enter HARDCASTLE, R. I E.

HARD. (R. C.). I'm mistaken, or I heard voices of people in want of help. O Tony, is that you? I did not expect you so soon back. Are your mother and her charge in safety?

TONY (L. C.). Very safe, sir, at my aunt Pedigree's. Hem.

MRS. H. (*from behind*). Ah, death! I find there's danger.

HARD. Forty miles in three hours! Sure that's too much, my youngster.

TONY. Stout horses and willing minds make short journeys, as they say. Hem.

MRS. H. (*from behind*). Sure he'll do the dear boy no harm!

HARD. But I heard a voice here; I should be glad to know from whence it came.

TONY. It was I, sir, talking to myself, sir. I was saying that forty miles in three hours was very good going. Hem. As to be sure it was. Hem. I have got a sort of cold by being out in the air. We'll go in, if you please. Hem.

(*Crosses R.*)

HARD. But if you talked to yourself, you did not answer yourself. I am certain I heard two voices, and am resolved (*raising his voice*) to find the other out.

MRS. H. (*running forward from behind*). Oh, lud, he'll murder my poor boy, my darling. Here, good gentleman,

whet your rage upon me. Take my money, my life, but spare that young gentleman, spare my child, if you have any mercy.

HARD. (C.). My wife, as I'm a Christian! From whence can she come, and what does she mean?

MRS. H. (*kneeling*, L. C.). Take compassion on us, good Mr. Highwayman! Take our money, our watches, all we have, but spare our lives. We will never bring you to justice, indeed we won't, good Mr. Highwayman.

HARD. I believe the woman's out of her senses. What, Dorothy, don't you know me? Your own doodly de dumpty.

MRS. H. Mr. Hardcastle, as I'm alive!

(HARDCASTLE *kneels down in front of her, and tries to look into her face. Her big hood falls over both their heads.*)

TONY. Have you got room for another inside there?

MRS. H. (*as MR. HARDCASTLE rises and helps her to her feet*). My fears blinded me. But who, my dear, could have expected to meet you here, in this frightful place, so far from home? What has brought you to follow us?

READY to change set.

HARD. Sure, Dorothy, you have not lost your wits? So far from home, when you are within forty yards of your own door? (*To TONY.*) This is one of your old tricks, you graceless rogue, you. (*To MRS. HARDCASTLE.*) Don't you know the gate and the mulberry-tree—and don't you remember the horse-pond, my dear?

MRS. H. Yes, I shall remember the horse-pond as long as I live; I have caught my death in it. (*To TONY.*) And is it to you, you graceless varlet, I owe all this? I'll teach you to abuse your mother, I will. (*Beating him.*)

TONY. Ecod, mother, all the parish says you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't.

MRS. H. I'll spoil you, I will.

(*Follows him off the stage still beating him.*)

Exeunt all, R. I E.

CHANGE set.

Scene II. — *Room in HARDCASTLE'S house, as before.*
Screen by fireplace, L.

LIGHTS full up.

Enter SIR CHARLES MARLOW *and* MISS HARDCASTLE, C.
from L.

SIR C. (R.). What a situation am I in! If what you say appears, I shall then find a guilty son. If what he says be true, I shall then lose one that, of all others, I most wished for a daughter.

MISS H. (L.). I am proud of your approbation, and to show I merit it, if you will conceal yourselves behind that screen, you shall hear his explicit declaration. But he comes.

SIR C. I'll to your father, and keep him to the appointment.

Exit C. *to L.*

Enter MARLOW, R. 2 E.

MAR. (*meets* MISS HARDCASTLE *at C.*). Though prepared for setting out, I come once more to take leave; nor did I, till this moment, know the pain I feel in the separation.

MISS H. (*in her own natural manner*). I believe these sufferings cannot be very great, sir, which you can so easily remove. A day or two longer, perhaps, might lessen your uneasiness, by showing the little value of what you now think proper to regret.

MAR. (*aside*). This girl every moment improves upon me. (*Aloud*.) It must not be, madam. I have already trifled too long with my heart. My very pride begins to submit to my passion; and nothing can restore me to myself, but this painful effort of resolution.

MISS H. Then go, sir. I'll urge nothing more to detain you. Though my family be as good as hers you came down to visit, and my education, I hope, not inferior, what are these advantages without equal affluence? I must remain contented with the slight approbation of imputed merit; I must have only the mockery of your addresses, while all your serious aims are fixed on fortune.

Enter HARDCASTLE *and* SIR CHARLES MARLOW, C. *from L.,*
and pass behind screen.

MAR. By Heavens, madam, fortune was ever my smallest consideration. Your beauty at first caught my eye; for who

could see that without emotion? But every moment that I converse with you, steals in some new grace, heightens the picture, and gives it stronger expression. What at first seemed rustic plainness, now appears refined simplicity. What seemed forward assurance, now strikes me as the result of courageous innocence and conscious virtue. I am now determined to stay, madam, and I have too good an opinion of my father's discernment, when he sees you, to doubt his approbation.

MISS H. No, Mr. Marlow; I will not, cannot detain you. Do you think I could suffer a connection in which there is the smallest room for repentance? Do you think I would take the mean advantage of a transient passion to load you with confusion? Do you think I could ever relish that happiness which was acquired by lessening yours? Do you think I could ever catch at the confident addresses of a secure admirer?

MAR. (*kneeling*). Does this look like security? Does this look like confidence? No, madam, every moment that shows me your merit, only serves to increase my diffidence and confusion. Here let me continue—

SIR C. (*emerging from L. of screen*). I can hold it no longer. Charles, Charles, how hast thou deceived me! Is this your indifference, your uninteresting conversation?

(*Comes down L.*)

HARD. (*emerging from R. of screen*). Your cold contempt; your formal interview? What have you to say now?

(*Comes down R.*)

MAR. That I'm all amazement! What can it mean?

(*Rising.*)

HARD. It means that you can say and unsay things at pleasure; that you can address a lady in private, and deny it in public; that you have one story for us, and another for my daughter.

MAR. Daughter!—this lady your daughter!

HARD. Yes, sir, my only daughter. She isn't yours, is she? My Kate; whose else could she be?

MAR. (*aside*). Oh, the devil!

MISS H. Yes, sir, that very identical tall, squinting lady you were pleased to take me for. (*Curtseying.*) She that you addressed as the mild, modest, sentimental man of gravity, and the bold, forward, agreeable Rattle of the ladies' club; ha! ha! ha!

MAR. Zounds! There's no bearing this; it's worse than death. *(Pacing to and fro in his agitation.)*

MISS H. *(L. C., chaffing him)*. In which of your characters, sir, will you give us leave to address you? As the faltering gentleman with looks on the ground, that speaks just to be heard, and hates hypocrisy; or the loud, confident creature that keeps it up with Mrs. Mantrap and old Mrs. Biddy Buckskin till three in the morning; ha! ha! ha!

MAR. *(R. C.)*. Oh, curses on my noisy head! I never attempted to be impudent yet that I was not taken down. I must be gone. *(Starts for R. 2 E.)*

HARD. *(preventing him, and bringing him down stage)*. By the hand of my body, but you shall not. I see it was all a mistake, and I rejoiced to find it. You shall not, sir, I tell you. I know she'll forgive you. Won't you forgive him, Kate? We'll all forgive him. Take courage, man.

(Puts MISS HARDCASTLE'S hand in that of MARLOW. They retire up stage, she still gently rallying him.)

Enter, R. 2 E., MRS. HARDCASTLE *followed by TONY. He is dragging his whip by the end of the lash, and leans up against R. wing, at first entrance.*

MRS. H. *(down C.)*. So, so, they're gone off. Let them go, I care not.

HARD. *(R. C.)*. Who gone?

MRS. H. My dutiful niece and her gentleman, Mr. Hastings, from town. He who came with our modest visitor here.

SIR C. *(L.)*. Who, my honest George Hastings? As worthy a fellow as lives, and the girl could not have made a more prudent choice.

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE, *L. 1 E.*

MRS. H. *(aside)*. What, returned so soon? I begin not to like it.

HAST. *(leading MISS NEVILLE to HARDCASTLE at R. C.)*. For my late attempt to fly off with your niece, let my present confusion be my punishment. We are now come back to appeal from your justice to your humanity. By her father's consent, I first paid her my addresses, and our passions were first founded on duty.

HARD. I'm glad they are come back to reclaim their due.

Come hither, Tony, boy. (TONY obeys sullenly.) Do you refuse this lady's hand whom I now offer you?

TONY. What signifies my refusing? You know I can't refuse her till I'm of age, father.

HARD. While I thought concealing your age, boy, was likely to conduce to your improvement, I concurred with your mother's desire to keep it secret; but since I find she turns it to a wrong use, I must now declare you have been of age these three months.

TONY. What! Have I come to years of discretion, father?

HARD. No, I didn't say that; but you are now your own master.

TONY. Of age! Am I of age, father?

HARD. Above three months.

TONY (*crossing to c.*). Then you'll see the first use I'll make of my liberty. (*Taking MISS NEVILLE's hand and swinging it backward and forward, chanting.*) Witness all men by these presents, that I, Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire, of Blank-place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife. So Constantia Neville may go to the devil (*throws her hand down.* MISS NEVILLE and HASTINGS *retire up stage*), marry whom she pleases, and Tony Lumpkin is his own man again. (*To MRS. HARDCASTLE in a coaxing tone.*) Now, mother, I've got one word to say.

MRS. H. (*crossing to L. of him*). What is it, my lovey?

TONY (*in a loud, coarse voice*). Horse-ponds.

(MRS. HARDCASTLE *screams, and beats him off*, R. 2 E.)

Exeunt R. 2 E.

WARN curtain.

MAR. (R. C.). Joy, my dear George, I give you joy sincerely. And could I prevail upon my little tyrant here to be less arbitrary, I should be the happiest man alive if you would return me the favor.

HAST. (*down R.; to MISS HARDCASTLE*). Come, madam, you are now driven to the very last scene of your contrivances. I know you like him, I'm sure he loves you, and you must and shall have him.

HARL. (*to C., joining their hands*). And I say so too. And,

Mr. Marlow, if she makes as good a wife as she has a daughter, I don't believe you'll ever repent your bargain. So, boy, take her; and as you have been mistaken in the mistress, my wish is, that you may never be mistaken in the wife.

(MISS HARDCASTLE *advances to the footlights, and with an arch smile addresses the audience.*)

Thus having stooped to conquer with success,
And gained a husband without aid of dress,
Still as a barmaid I could wish it, too,
As I have conquered him to conquer — you.

(*Steps back.*)

RING curtain.

MISS HARDCASTLE

MARLOW. ○

HARDCASTLE

MISS NEVILLE. ○

○

SIR CHARLES

○

○

HASTINGS.

○

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ACT II.—SCENE 1. Parlor at Dilworthy's. Father and son. A pair of rascals. "Don't *you* preach morality." The agreement. Chub and Peggy. A lovers' quarrel. "Don't want your candy." The story of a crime. The forced confession. SCENE 2. A road in the forest. A lost "coon." "I isn't scared." Some fun. Mirth and music. Alice and Leonard. Her decision. The promise. SCENE 3. Bascom's home. A conference. Barney learns a secret. A presentiment of evil. A threatened quarrel. "Why don't you throw me out? I'm used to it." The plotters. Dilworthy's demand. A murderous scoundrel. A rifle shot. The accusation. "Before another night the truth shall be known!"

ACT III.—Library at the Major's. Peggy and Ephraim compare notes. "I'd like jes' one slash at dat ole Dilworthy!" The Major explains. The examination. Taking testimony. "Stick to your story." Charlotte makes some remarks. "Hurrah for Ireland!" The clodhopper. Barney wants to fight. Ephraim and the "ghost." An unexpected arrival. "Dar's de ghost!" Cornered at last. A game of bluff. Mother Carew; A startling *denouement*. Vindication. Justice asserts herself. Reunited at last. *Finale*.

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